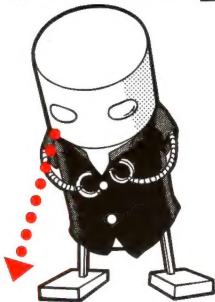


CROMARTIE HIGH SCHOOL



Eiji Nonaka

**CROMARTIE
HIGH SCHOOL**

IN ATTENDANCE

**THE OTOKOGI TOBIRA
THE MANLY TITLE PAGE**



SAKIGAKE!!

Vol.

2

**CROMARTIE
HIGH★SCHOOL**

by EIJI NONAKA

PLAYER PIECES



GOAL!

YOU ARE
ONE SPLENDID
BADASS!

WARP ZONE

YOU'RE AT THE
SOUTH WIND CAMP
YOU CAN'T GET AWAY
YOU HAVE TO WASH
DISHES YOU GET
DISHPAN HANDS.
LOSE 1 TURN.

EVERYONE IS AT
MAEDA'S WHEN
HIS MOM SHOWS
UP YOU RECOIL
IN FEAR MOVING
BACK 3 SPACES.

YOU ARE
SUSPENDED FOR
FIGHTING THE
DESTRADO BOYS
(LOSE 1 TURN).

YOU'RE AT THE
STRONG MAN
COMPETITION
ADVANCE 3
SPACES FOR
YOUR MARTIAL
EXPLOITS.

YOU'RE FRUSTRATED
THAT YOU CAN'T FIGURE
FREDDIE OUT FREDDIE
DOES PUSHUPS FOR
NO REASON.

WARP ZONE

ERRAND BOY
TO MERCHANT
KAMUYAMA
ADVANCES 3.

YOU'RE CAUGHT
IN ONE OF HIRAI-SAN
THE FLUNKER'S
LECTURES YEN-ROG
DRAWING.
LOSE 1 TURN.

WARP ZONE

WARP ZONE

PROTECT OUR
WORLD FROM THE
MAN! RAISE YOUR
FISTS AND GIVE A
MIGHTY SHOUT (ALL
TOGETHER!)

WARP ZONE

RAID ON BASS
HIGHLY COOL IN
STYLE BY TAKI!
BUT NOT A TOST.
GO BACK 10
START.

A UFO HAS
LANDED AT THE
SCHOOL! YOU
BOARD WITHOUT A
SECOND THOUGHT
ADVANCE 10 3
SPACES BEFORE
GOAL.

CROMARTIE HIGH SCHOOL

START

I'VE ENROLLED AT CROMARTIE HIGH,
THE BIGGEST DEN OF THUGS IN JAPAN!

THE MANLY BOARD GAME

THE OTOKOGI SUGOROK

WARP ZONE

YOU'RE SHOPPING
FOR ELECTRONICS BUT
SOMEONE MISTAKES YOU
FOR MERCHANDISE. DO
THE ROROT DANCE.
MECHAZAWA!

THE BASS GUYS
HAVE COME TO PICK A
FIGHT WITH TAKE NOUCHI
BUT HE'S NOT AROUND!
ALL BUT TAKE NOUCHI
ADVANCE 1 SPACE.

THOUGHT YOU'D BECOME
BAD BY BLEACHING YOUR HAIR
BUT IT DIDN'T WORK! KAMIYAMA
MOVES BACK 3 SPACES.

WARP ZONE

BIRTHDAY PARTY
AT MAEDA'S IN HONOR
OF THE BIRTHDAY BOY
EVERYONE BUT MAEDA
MOVES BACK 3
SPACES.

YOU'VE BEEN
KIDNAPPED BY BASS
AND NO ONE COMES
TO HELP. LOSE
1 TURN.

WARP ZONE

WARP ZONE

PEOPLE STILL
DON'T KNOW YOUR
NAME! HOKUTO'S
HENCHMAN SING
"BEAUTIFUL
NAME!"

GET THAT BANANA!
GORILLA ADVANCES 3.
HAYASHIDA AND
FREDDIE GO BACK 2
SINCE THEY
FAILED.

EXAMS ARE
COMING! SAY 3
WORDS IN
ENGLISH!

WARP ZONE

OUT OF OIL
MECHAZAWA
GOES BACK 3.

YOU WANTED
TO TAKE OVER
CROMARTIE! BUT GOT
LOST IN A WEB OF
YOUR OWN DECEIT.
HOKUTO! CONFESS
YOUR LIES.

YOU'RE FEELING
MOTION SICK! THEN
SOMEONE HANDS
YOU A PUDDING.
YOU'RE DONE FOR!
TAKE NOUCHI LOSES
1 TURN! KAMIYAMA
ADVANCES 3.

Please find a
game die on your
own. Move ahead
the same number
of spaces as you
roll. If you land on a
warp zone, move
your piece forward
(or back) to the
space indicated by
the arrow.
Whoever reaches
GOAL first wins. If
you'd rather not cut
up this manga,
please copy these
pages. Or buy
another volume and
cut it up instead.

★ HOW TO PLAY

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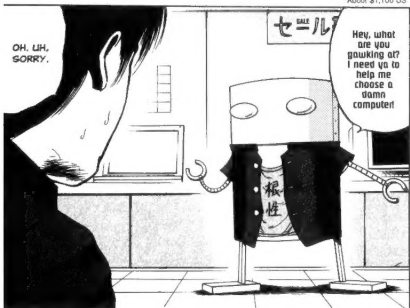
CHAPTER TWENTY-FOUR: **SHOPPING BOOGIE**



*About \$800 US



*About \$1,100 US





I've never even TOUCHED a computer.

TODAY WAS THE FIRST TIME MECHAZAWA-KUN HAD EVER ASKED ME FOR ANYTHING. I WAS SO FLABBERGASTED, ALL I COULD DO WAS FOLLOW HIM TO THIS ELECTRONICS STORE.



THAT'S ALMOST LIKE A BASEBALL PLAYER SAYING HE'S NEVER PUT ON A FIELDER'S GLOVE! MORE TO THE POINT--AND I FIND MYSELF ASKING THIS ONCE AGAIN--WHAT THE HECK IS MECHAZAWA, ANYWAY?!

NEVER TOUCHED A COMPUTER?!



On shirt: "Guts."



I MEAN, HE PROBABLY
WOULDN'T LOOK
ENTIRELY OUT OF
PLACE IF I SLAPPED A
TAG ON HIM AND PUT
HIM ON A SHELF...

BUT SHOULD
I REALLY
BE SO
CONCERNED?

PHIEW, THAT WAS A CLOSE
CALL. HANGING AROUND WITH
MECHAZAWA CAN BE QUITE
NERVE-WRACKING. STILL,
I SUPPOSE COMING TO AN
ELECTRONICS STORE WAS A
RISKY VENTURE TO BEGIN WITH.

Which
one
should
I get?

I'M THE ONLY ONE WHO CAN STAND
UP FOR HIM RIGHT NOW. HE'S MY
CLASSMATE, AND THIS IS A MATTER
OF DUTY! IF IT COMES DOWN TO
FRIENDSHIP OR COMMON SENSE,
THEN I CHOOSE FRIENDSHIP!

WHAT
AM I
THINKING?
HE'S A
HUMAN
BEING! YES,
I THINK SO!

EARLIER, I MIGHT
HAVE THOUGHT
SOMETHING LIKE,
"HOW THE HELL
COULD IT ITCH?"
BUT NO MORE!
HIS BACK ITCHES,
AND THAT'S ALL
THERE IS TO IT.

.....
Kamiyama,
you mind
scratching
my back?

Hrm.
Man,
my
back
itches.

A LITTLE
LOWER...

H-
HERE?



I WANT
TO
PRESS
IT.



HE...HE
HAS A
SWITCH
ON HIS
BACK!

SWITCH



IT WOULD BE QUITE
RUDE TO JUST PICK
SOMEONE ELSE'S
SCABS WITHOUT
ASKING, THOUGH.

IT'S THE
SAME KIND
OF FEELING I
GET WHEN I
SEE A SCAB
ON SOMEONE
AND THINK,
"HMM, I'D LIKE
TO PEEL
THAT OFF."



ARGH, I
WANT TO
PRESS IT!



SO WHAT IF HE HAS A SWITCH ON THE BACK OF HIS HEAD? MAYBE I HAVE A SWITCH ON MY HEAD, AND I JUST NEVER NOTICED. THERE ARE SO MANY PEOPLE IN THIS WORLD, THERE MUST BE AT LEAST THREE OR FOUR OTHERS LIKE THAT.

ENOUGH!
I NEED TO CLEAR MY MIND OF SUCH THOUGHTS. I MUST COMPOSE MYSELF.



Huh?

UH, YOU DROPPED SOMETHING.



GA-CHNG

PONK



A SPRING?!



NO! GET A GRIP! I CAN'T LET THIS AFFECT OUR **FRIENDSHIP**! THIS IS A VERY LARGE WORLD, INDEED. I'LL BET THERE ARE SEVERAL PEOPLE OUT THERE WITH SPRINGS ATTACHED TO THEM!



OH, BOY. THIS COULD DRIVE A WEDGE BETWEEN US. NO MATTER HOW YOU LOOK AT IT, A SPRING MEANS...

BUT THAT
WAS THEN.
NOW, I'VE
COME TO SEE
YOU AS A
CLOSE FRIEND.
AND, YES,
HUMAN.

I-I ONCE
MISTOOK
YOU FOR
SOMETHING
ELSE.

I DON'T CARE
WHAT OTHER
PEOPLE THINK.
MECHAZAWA-
KUN, TO ME,
YOU'LL
ALWAYS BE
HUMAN.

WHAT?!
MY GOD,
YOU'RE
RIGHT!

EXCUSE ME,
SIR, BUT
THAT IS A
WASHING
MACHINE.

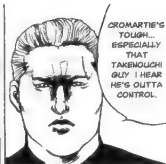
AS ADVERTISED
CLEARANCE

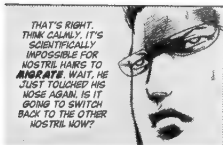
AND EVEN
WORSE,
THEY
SOLD
HIM!

MECHAZAWA'S BEEN PURCHASED.

CHAPTER TWENTY-FIVE: THE MEETING GOES ON AND ON

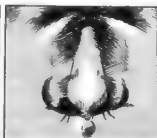








**THERE'S
MORE
OF
THEM!**





I'VE
GOT
THEM,
TOO.



THIS IS
SOMETHING
ONLY YOU AND
I CAN DECIDE
C'MON, MAN!
YOU'RE AN
ANIMAL! WHAT
DO YOU SAY?!



There
are
more
now



ALRIGHT,
THEN! EVEN IF
WE GOTTA
GO THROUGH
HELL, IT'S ALL
ABOUT US,
TOGETHER!

IT'S ALL ABOUT YOUR NOSE HAIR.

CHAPTER TWENTY-SIX: **YOU KNOW MY NAME**



HEH,
OF
COURSE!

YEAH, HE
DOESN'T
HAVE A
MOHAWK,
THOUGH.



SO, YOU RESEMBLE
~~YOUR FATHER?~~
WELL, I'D SURE
LIKE TO SEE HIM
SOMETIME,
HAYASHIDA-KUN.



HAI
YEAH,
TO-
TALLY!

YEAH,
WELL,
EVERYONE
KNOWS
THAT.



AND
MAEDA-KUN
DEFINITELY
LOOKS LIKE
HIS MOTHER!



BY THE
WAY...UH...



"YOU"?!



I'LL BET,
UH, YOU
RESEMBLE ONE
OF YOUR
PARENTS,
TOO. DON'T
YOU?



HA
HA
HA
HA

UH, WORLD
DOMINATION,
I GUESS...



HEY,
WHAT DID
EVERYONE
DREAM OF
DOING WHEN
THEY WERE
KIDS? HOW
ABOUT YOU,
HOKUTO?



YOUR
GRANDPA?!
SWAHAKA!

NAH,
I LOOK
LIKE MY
GRANDPA
THE
MOST.



HA HA!
FREDDIE'S
NOT GOING
TO ANSWER
YOU!

I DOUBT HE
EVER WAS A
KID!



WHAT
ABOUT YOU,
FREDDIE?
WHAT WAS
YOUR
DREAM?



AND
WHAT
ABOUT
YOU,
UM...

EVERYONE
KEEPS CALLING
ME "YOU" OR
"DUDE" AND
STUFF. I WANT
YOU TO CALL
ME BY MY NAME,
ALRIGHT?

NOW
WAIT
JUST A
DAMN
SECOND!

DUDE?

WHAT?!
COME ON,
NOW! I'VE
BEEN AT
THIS
SCHOOL
FOR SIX
MONTHS
ALREADY!

SORRY.

YOU DO
KNOW MY
NAME,
DON'T
YOU?

I DON'T
BELIEVE THIS!
AND WHY DID
YOU HAVE TO
BE SO BLUNT
ABOUT IT?!

NO.

WELL,
WE'VE
KNOWN EACH
OTHER FOR
A LONG
TIME. YOU
REMEMBER
MY NAME,
RIGHT?

HOW CAN
YOU SAY
SOME-
THING SO
TERRIBLE
AND BE
SO CALM
ABOUT
IT?!

NONE
OF US
REALLY
CARE.

Y-
YES?

I THINK
THE
REASON
WE DON'T
KNOW IS
THAT...





I'VE NEVER SEEN A GUY GO THROUGH SO MUCH JUST SO HE CAN TELL PEOPLE HIS NAME.

WHAT ARE YOU, OUR GOFER?

HERE, I GOT THIRTY OF 'EM. IT'S ON ME, SO DRINK UP!



FINE! I'LL GET YOU SOME SODAS OR SOMETHING!

DAMN, I'M SO THIRSTY

NOW WE'RE OUT OF JUICE.



FINE! I'LL GO JOIN IN!

HEY, A FIGHT STARTED IN THE CLASS NEXT DOOR!



MY NAME IS...

OK! NOW I'M GONNA TELL YA!



NO, NOTHING.

NOW, IS THERE ANYTHING ELSE I NEED TO TAKE CARE OF? 'CUZ IF THERE IS, NOW'S THE TIME TO SAY SO!



I NEVER KNEW YOU WERE SO TOUGH.

BUT, I GOT PRETTY MESSED UP, TOO.

I BEAT THE SHOT OUTTA ALL OF 'EM.

30 MINUTES LATER



NOW I CAN FINALLY TELL YOU MY NAME.

ALRIGHT, THEN, IT LOOKS LIKE I'VE TAKEN CARE OF EVERYTHING.

MY
NAME
IS...

LISTEN
AND
LISTEN
GOOD!



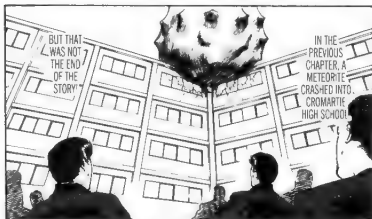
THIS
ISN'T
POSSIBLE!

LOOK! A
METEORITE
JUST
CRASHED
INTO THE
SCHOOL!



UH, WHAT WAS YOUR NAME AGAIN?

CHAPTER TWENTY-SEVEN SHOOTING STAR PRESS



I REALIZE THAT A METEORITE CRASHING INTO THE SCHOOL IS A BIG DEAL AND ALL... BUT WOULD YA PLEASE JUST LET ME TELL YOU MY NAME?!

WHAT?

OK, LISTEN UP!

IT'S CRAZY!

DAMN. THAT'S WILD.

NOT AGAIN!

HEY, CHECK IT OUT!

MY NAME IS...

NOW, AS I WAS SAYING...

FIVE SECONDS. THAT'S ALL I ASK!

OH, THAT'S RIGHT. YOU STILL HAVEN'T TOLD US.



WOULD
YOU JUST
LISTEN FOR
A SECOND?



WHAT'S
GONNA
HAPPEN TO
US NOW?



WHAT'S
THE BIG DEAL
ABOUT SOME
METEORITE?
I MEAN, SURE IT
POPPED OPEN,
BUT SO WHAT?

SCIENTIFICALLY
SPEAKING, I'M SURE
THAT METEORITE IS
PRETTY SIGNIFICANT.
BUT AS FAR AS
YOU'RE CONCERNED,
ISN'T IT MORE
IMPORTANT TO KNOW
YOUR FRIENDS'
NAMES?

MY
NAME!

MORE
IMPOR-
TANT?
LIKE
WHAT?

THAT'S
PUTTING IT
RATHER
BLUNTLY,
HAYASHIDA-
KUN, THOUGH
IT IS A VALID
OPINION

IT DON'T
REALLY
MAKE A
DIFFERENCE
IF WE KNOW
YOUR NAME
OR NOT,
DUDE

YOU HAVE A POINT...
BUT WHETHER OR NOT
YOUR NAME IS MORE
SIGNIFICANT THAN THE
METEORITE IS A
MATTER BEST
DETERMINED BY GROUP
DELIBERATION.

'CUZ I'M
RIGHT!
IT'S MORE
IMPORTANT
FOR YOU
TO KNOW
MY NAME.

DAMN,
THAT'S
ROUGH.

BUT I'M YOUR FRIEND!
WHAT CAN YOU SAY
ABOUT A METEORITE?
YOU'RE JUST GONNA
FREAK AND SAY THINGS
LIKE "WHOAH" AND "CHECK
IT OUT!" YOU DON'T EVEN
KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT
ASTRONOMY!

NOW
WHAT?!

WHOA,
CHECK
IT OUT!

MY
NAME
IS...

OK,
HERE
GOES.

THANKS! I
PROMISE
I'LL MAKE
IT QUICK!

HUH, I
GUESS
YOU
SHOULD
TELL US,
THEN.

ALIENS
ARE
COMING
OUT OF IT!

FWOO
PRR

FWOO
PRR

FWOO
PRR



Aliens
use rope
adders?

HOLY
CRAP!

THEY'RE
CLIMBING
DOWN ON
A ROPE
LADDER!



Take
your
time
going
down.

Watch
your
step.



WHAT
DO WE
DO
NOW?!

THIS IS
GETTING
OUTTA
CONTROL!



R-RUN
FOR IT!

stop
stop

LIKE HELL!
I AIN'T
LISTENIN' TO
NO ALIEN
INTRODUCE
HIMSELF!



WHA...

Greetings,
Earthlings. We
are aliens.
Allow us to
introduce
ourselves.



Hm?
Who
are
you?

WAIT!



A pity.

It seems
they're
running
away.



THANKS.
I KNEW YOU'D
UNDERSTAND,
EVEN IF MY
FELLOW
EARTHLINGS
DON'T.

Very
well. Feel
free to
introduce
yourself
to us.

I'M JUST A
MISERABLE MAN WHO
MISSED THE CHANCE
TO INTRODUCE
HIMSELF TO HIS
FRIENDS. IF THAT'S
HOW IT HAS TO BE,
THEN I DON'T CARE IF
YOU ARE ALIENS—
PLEASE, LET ME TELL
YOU MY NAME!

HUNT?!

Ah.
Already?

Captain,
it's time.

MY
NAME
IS...

OK,
ALIENS!

BYE!
Fare-
well.

WHY'D
THEY EVEN
COME?

THERE
THEY
GO

MY
NAME...

B
W
O
O
R

VWEEE

They've
come for
us.

SEEING YOUR
EXCHANGE WITH
THE ALIENS JUST
NOW MADE ME WANT
TO RECONSIDER
WHAT
I SAID EARLIER. AS
A FELLOW EARTHLING,
I OUGHT TO BE
ASHAMED.
PLEASE, TELL US
YOUR NAME! WE'D
LOVE TO
HEAR IT!

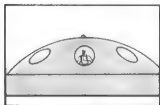
H
M
?

GOT
A
SEC?

EVEN
ALIENS
IGNORE
ME.



ISN'T
THAT
RIGHT?



WH-WHO
ARE
YOU?!



HUH?



I GUESS
THEY WON'T
BE HEARING
MY NAME
FOR A WHILE,
THEN...



THE ALIENS
MUST HAVE
ACCIDENTALLY
TAKEN
FREDDIE!

FAREWELL, FREDDIE.

CHARACTER INTRODUCTIONS 1

TAKASHI KAMIYAMA

This manga's protagonist or at least he was supposed to be. Lately, it seems he's getting pushed farther and farther into the background. He is an honors student who somehow ended up enrolling at Japan's lowest and most vile high school, Cromartie High. Before anyone knew it, he'd managed to adjust to this new environment, and he is now enjoying an active school life. He is thought to be a very composed young man. One of Takashi's hobbies is contributing to a late-night radio program. The jokes he writes are of such high quality he could probably make a career out of it. His pen name is "Honey Boy," for the simple reason that during a certain meeting, the author had some honey on his desk. Kamiyama's catchphrase is, "Dear Mother." I wonder why.



SHINJIRO HAYASHIDA

A student at Cromartie High, which is notorious for admitting students so long as they can add or subtract—except Hayashida is unable to do even that. His trademark feature is his mohawk. Hayashida is an idiot who realizes his idiocy, but who nonetheless has interfered with the progression of the story on more than one occasion. In Volume 1, it was revealed that his intelligence is lower than that of a gorilla. As a moron, he stands out among the students of Cromartie, and at times his buffoonery has stunned longtime readers—small wonder, since he has occasionally even stunned the author. Recently, Hayashida has been operating in full friendship mode with Kamiyama and Maeda. His hobby is making a nuisance of himself at Maeda's house, and his catchphrase is, "Not to change the subject, but..."

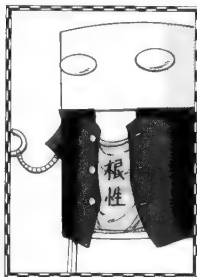


CHARACTER INTRODUCTIONS 2



AKIRA MAEDA

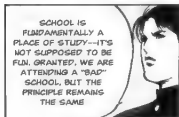
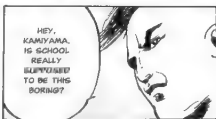
He finally got himself a nickname—"The Dragon of Razors." Sadly, however, nobody calls him that. Instead, Maeda continues to play second fiddle to all the buffoons at Cromartie. He is constantly getting kidnapped by other schools, but no one ever comes to his rescue. People tend to hang out at his house without asking if it's alright. He gets walked over, pushed around, and is often the victim of various misfortunes. He worries that he doesn't have any sort of presence, which makes you want to give him a pat on the shoulder and say, "But you do have presence—and plenty of it!" His catchphrase is, "Whoa, wait a minute!" He is renowned throughout Japan for his startling resemblance to his mother.



SHINICHI MECHAZAWA

Truly, a man among men at Cromartie. And **not** a machine among machines. Outside of Kamiyama's group, nobody (for some reason) doubts his humanity, allowing him to lead a normal school life. Since Mechazawa believes he is in fact human, Kamiyama and the others cannot bring themselves to inform him otherwise. It's just one of those awkward situations, like if you were to tell someone who wears a hairpiece, "Hey man, your toupee's not on right." Mechazawa was rated the #1 most popular character in a recent *Shonen Magazine* poll, which is why he is featured on the cover of this volume. All the girls are talking about how "cute" he is... even though he's just a tin can (LOL).

CHAPTER TWENTY EIGHT: THE IDLE MAEDA







ANYHOW, A LOT OF DELINQUENTS DON'T SEEM TO UNDERSTAND THAT BECAUSE SCHOOL IS A PLACE FOR STUDYING, YOU CAN'T EXPECT ANYTHING INTERESTING OR EVEN SURPRISING TO HAPPEN HERE.



I DON'T SEE WHY HE'D NEED TO RIDE A HORSE TO SCHOOL...

I THOUGHT HE WENT TO SPACE.

FREDDIE'S GOT A HORSE, MAN.

clop



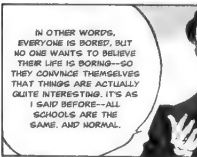
THEN YOUR FRIENDS ARE EXAGGERATING! I'M TELLING YOU, THEIR SCHOOLS ARE AS NORMAL AS OURS!

BUT SOME DUDES I KNOW SAY THAT THEIR SCHOOLS ARE FRICKIN' AWESOME!



NO! SUCH THINGS ARE MERE ILLUSIONS, LIKE A CHILD BELIEVING THAT SOMEONE ELSE'S TOYS ARE BETTER THAN HIS OWN!

BUT DON'T YOU THINK OTHER SCHOOLS COULD BE MORE INTERESTING THAN CROMARTIE?



IN OTHER WORDS, EVERYONE IS BORED, BUT NO ONE WANTS TO BELIEVE THEIR LIFE IS BORING--SO THEY CONVINCE THEMSELVES THAT THINGS ARE ACTUALLY QUITE INTERESTING. IT'S AS I SAID BEFORE--ALL SCHOOLS ARE THE SAME. AND NORMAL.

LISTEN, AN ACQUAINTANCE OF MINE TOLD ME THAT HE RECENTLY BECAME FRIENDS WITH A "TOTALLY WILD DUDE." BUT WHEN I MET THE PERSON MYSELF, HE TURNED OUT TO BE COMPLETELY NORMAL! STORIES LIKE THIS ARE EXTREMELY COMMON.



I'M SORRY, BUT THERE'S JUST NOTHING HERE FOR PEOPLE TO GET EXCITED OVER. I GUARANTEE IT.



I DON'T UNDERSTAND. ALL I KNOW IS I WANT MORE ACTION!

CLOMP

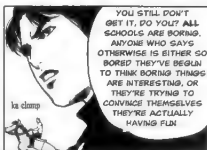
CLOMP

CLOMP

CLOMP

WHOA!





YEOW!

FWWWWWW

OH, NO!
THAT
HORSE
IS BITING
MAEDA'S
HEAD!



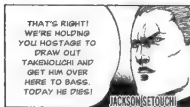
THE HELL
IT DOES!

MAN, STUFF
LIKE THAT
ALWAYS
HAPPENS.

IT DOESN'T.

CHAPTER TWENTY-NINE:

AT LEAST IT'S A BATTLE WITHOUT HONOR AND HUMANITY





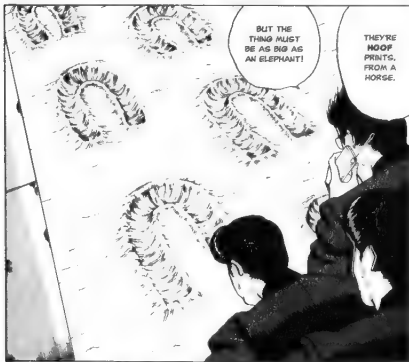
WELL?
WHAT
DID YOU
SEE?!



AND
I JUST
SAW
SOME
CRAZY
STUFF.



AKIO TAKEJO, BASS'S #2 MAN.







THAT...
THAT'S
PROBABLY
NOT A
SNACK
MACHINE.



IT WON'T
TAKE OUR
MONEY!

努力

On Ji's essay



THEY'VE
GOT A
GORILLA!



NOT
AGAIN.

OH, DAMN!
YOU'RE NOT
GOING TO
BELIEVE
WHAT WE
FOUND!
NOW!



I NEVER
SAW NO
GUY WHO
LOOKED
LIKE A
GORILLA
HERE.

NO! IT'S NOT
A GUY WHO
LOOKS LIKE A
GORILLA--IT'S
THE REAL
THING!

EVERY
SCHOOL'S
GOT AT
LEAST ONE
OR TWO
GUYS WHO
LOOK LIKE
GORILLAS,
ALRIGHT?



LISTEN.

WHY THE HELL WOULD A GORILLA BE WEARIN' A UNIFORM?!

Waugh

DOOGA

AND...IS THIS GORILLA WEARING A SCHOOL UNIFORM, BY ANY CHANCE?

SO THEY HAVE A GORILLA.

FINE.

BUT WE DON'T KNOW IF IT'S A STUDENT OR NOT.

YEAH.

YOU GUYS HAVE A GORILLA?

WHAT COULD POSSIBLY BE CRAZIER THAN A GORILLA?

LOOK.

OH, MAN! WE FOUND SOMETHIN' EVEN CRAZIER!

DON'T TELL ME YOU'RE RUNNING INTO SPACEMEN OR SOMETHING.

I MEAN, IT WOULD HAVE TO BE SOMETHING LIKE...



WE FEEL FOR YOU, SETOUCHI.

CHAPTER THIRTY: SLEEPERS

BUT A LOT HAS HAPPENED
SINCE THEN, CERTAINLY MORE
THAN I AM ABLE TO RELAY
TO YOU AT THE MOMENT.

Not to mention that the readers
seem to have forgotten I'M the
hero of this manga.

DEAR MOTHER,
QUITE SOME TIME
HAS PASSED SINCE
I ENROLLED HERE AT
CROMARTIE. INITIALLY,
I WORKED HARD
TOWARD MY GOAL
OF CHANGING
THIS SCHOOL...

ESTABLISHING
A MORE SOLID
PRESENCE FOR
MYSELF IN THE
PROCESS.

HOWEVER,
I HAVE AGAIN
MADE IT MY
MISSION TO
REFORM
THESE "BAD"
STUDENTS...

AND OF THOSE
SEVEN, FIVE ARE
FAST ASLEEP. I THINK
I WILL TRY TO WAKE
EACH OF THEM UP...

UNFORTUNATELY,
MOST STUDENTS
DON'T EVEN COME TO
SCHOOL. OF THE 38
STUDENTS IN MY
CLASS, ONLY SEVEN
ARE PRESENT
TODAY.

I'LL
LEAVE
THAT
IDIOT
ALONE
FOR THE
TIME
BEING.

EXCEPT
PERHAPS FOR
MY FRIEND
HAYASHIDA-
KUN, WHO HAS
SPREAD OUT
A FUTON TO
SLEEP ON.



STILL, HE IS THE MOST FEROCIOUS STUDENT IN OUR CLASS. IF I GO ABOUT THIS THE WRONG WAY, HE MIGHT KILL ME... BUT NO! I WON'T BACK DOWN IN THE FACE OF A CHALLENGE!

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I'LL START WITH WATANABE-KUN INSTEAD

I'LL JUST LET HIM BE FOR NOW. AFTER ALL, HE'S NOT EVEN IN THIS CLASS.

IN A WAY, THIS IS SOMETHING OF A TALENT. IF I WERE TO AWAKEN HIM NOW, IT WOULD ONLY HINDER THE DEVELOPMENT OF THIS ABILITY.

UM... CONSIDERING THAT WE'RE STILL IN CLASS, I THOUGHT THE MOST PRUDENT COURSE WOULD BE TO WAKE YOU.

HUH? WHAT THE HELL DO YA WANT?!

PLEASE WAKE UP.

P-PERISH THE THOUGHT! IF I HAVE OFFENDED YOU IN ANY WAY, PLEASE ACCEPT MY SINCEREST APOLOGIES!

OH, I GOT IT. YA WANNA FIGHT, HUH?



HUH?

BY THE WAY, WHAT WERE YOU DREAMING ABOUT?

TELL YOU WHAT. I GIVE IN! YOU CAN GO RIGHT BACK TO SLEEP. BUT I MUST GIVE YOU FAIR WARNING. YOU WILL NOT MAKE ANY ACADEMIC PROGRESS IF YOU SLEEP THROUGH CLASS.



IT WAS
THAT
GOOD,
HUH?

INCIDENTALLY,
I HAD A VERY
INTERESTING
DREAM THE
OTHER NIGHT.
WOULD YOU
CARE TO
HEAR IT?



SOMEONE ONCE
SAID THAT
DREAMS ARE
ESSENTIAL TO
CULTIVATING
A HEALTHY
IMAGINATION.



A TERRIBLE
DEMON HAD
APPEARED,
BRINGING DEATH
AND DESTRUCTION.
HUMANITY
WAS BEING
SLAUGHTERED.

THE
WORLD
WAS
ENGULFED
IN DARK-
NESS.



HOWEVER, I
WAS FACED
WITH A MOST
UNEXPECTED
PITFALL.



HEH, YOU
GOT SOME
BRASS
ONES, EVEN
IN YOUR
DREAMS.

I, OF COURSE,
WAS THE HERO,
WHO WOULD
FIGHT AND
HOPEFULLY
DEFEAT THE
DEMON.



WHO
CAN SAY?
THINGS LIKE
THAT JUST
HAPPEN IN
DREAMS.

WHY WOULD
YOU HAVE
TO GO
THROUGH
REGI-
STRATION
TO BE A
HERO?



IN ORDER TO
DEFEAT THE
DEMON, I FIRST
HAD TO UNDERGO
REGISTRATION AT
CITY HALL FOR MY
HERO'S LICENSE.

I WAS ALMOST CERTAIN IT WAS THE LINE I HAD TO GET IN FOR REGISTRATION...

THERE WAS A HUGE LINE OUTSIDE OF CITY HALL.

WHO WOULDN'T BE?! ALL PEOPLE CARE ABOUT THESE DAYS IS THEMSELVES! THAT'S PROOF RIGHT THERE!

I WAS VERY UPSET TO HEAR THAT

IT TURNED OUT THAT DEMON-FIGHTING REGISTRATIONS WERE THE LOWEST PRIORITY.

Bureaucrat
HERE YOU GO.

BUT IT WAS ACTUALLY FOR TAX RETURNS OR RESIDENCE CERTIFICATES, OR SOMETHING OF THAT SORT.



SO I WENT AND KILLED THE DEMON WITHOUT CERTIFICATION.

BUT THEY SAID IT WOULD BE A MONTH BEFORE I WAS OFFICIALLY CERTIFIED

AT ANY RATE, I FINALLY MADE IT UP TO THE COUNTER...



I'M SORRY.

FOR SOME REASON, HAYASHIDA-KUN WAS THEIR RING-LEADER.

YOU'VE REALLY DONE IT NOW!

WHO DO YOU THINK YOU ARE, KILLING DEMONS WITHOUT A LICENSE?

YOU BROKE THE RULES!

THIS ACT ONLY MADE ME THE VICTIM OF PUBLIC OUTRAGE.



NO MATTER
WHAT YOU DO,
MAKE SURE YOU
RECEIVE THE
NECESSARY
APPROVAL
AND/OR
CERTIFICATIONS
FIRST.

HMM. I
SUPPOSE
THE MORAL
OF THE
STORY IS...

ANYWAY,
WHAT ARE
YOU TRYIN'
TO SAY
WITH ALL
THIS?

FOR
STARTERS.
YOU COULD
WRITE
SOMETHING
OUT ON PAPER
AND SUBMIT IT
TO THE
TEACHER

YEAH,
BUT HOW
COULD
I GET REGIS-
TERED FOR
SOMETHING
LIKE THAT?

WELL,
THAT'S NOT
EXACTLY IT,
BUT I
SUPPOSE
IT'S CLOSE
ENOUGH.

AH, SO.
LIKE, I
SHOULD
GO GET
REGISTERED
TO SLEEP IN
CLASS?

ALRIGHT!
MAN, FOR
SOME
REASON
I'M
PUMPED!

SO LONG AS YOU
CLEARLY EXPRESS
WHY YOU WANT
TO SLEEP, SUCH
AS "I GOTTA" OR
"I'M BEAT," I'M
SURE THEY'LL
UNDERSTAND

I'M NOT
SURE, BUT
YOU NEED
TO CONVEY
YOUR
DESIRE TO
SLEEP.

WHAT
SHOULD I
WRITE?

THE MAN
WHO MADE
THE MOST
FEROCIOUS
STUDENT IN
CLASS DROP
OUT

N-NO
WAY!

FOR
REAL?

HEY, DID
YA HEAR?
WATANABE
TURNED
IN A WITH-
DRAWAL
FORM!

DEAR MOTHER,
SOMETHING
NICE HAPPENED
YESTERDAY

MOM
DAD

AND HE WASN'T EVEN SUCH A BAD GUY...

CHAPTER THIRTY-ONE: SEPTEMBER

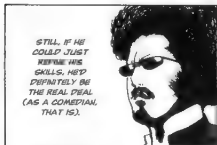




SAKAMOTO...
THAT WAS A
GOOD ONE!



"UH,
WHO'S THIS
TAKENOUCHI
GUY?"



STILL, IF HE
COULD JUST
REFINE HIS
SKILLS, HE'D
DEFINITELY BE
THE REAL DEAL
(AS A COMEDIAN,
THAT IS).



AH,
WELL,
SUPPOSE
HE IS
SOME-
THING
OF AN
AIRHEAD."

IT'S JUST
SAD YOU
DON'T
REALIZE
YOUR OWN
TALENT.



HA HA!
C'MON,
ISHIKAWA!
NOT NOW,
MAN!

Grrra
ha ha
ha!

'CUZ WE
KNOCK 'EM
DOWN AS
GOOD AS
WE KNOCK
THE LADIES
UP!



THE POINT IS,
IF THOSE GUYS
GET TOO
COCKY, IT'S OUR
JOB TO KNOCK
'EM DOWN A
COUPLE
NOTCHES.



BWACK



HUH?

ISHI-
KAWA.



"WE KNOCK 'EM
DOWN AS GOOD
AS WE KNOCK
THE LADIES UP."



UNGH...
YEAH.

YOU
OK?

HANG
IN
THERE,
DUDE!



YOU SHOULDN'T
HAVE SAID THAT.
MAN, YAMAGUCHI
HATES JOKES AND
STUFF.



CAN IT
WITH THE
LOUSY
JOKES!

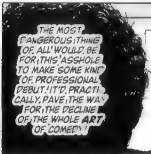


I HIT ISHIKAWA
BECAUSE HE HAD TO
GO AND TELL SOME
VULGAR JOKE!
GUYS WITH NO SENSE
OF COMEDY ARE
ALWAYS RESORTING
TO THAT KIND OF
HUMOR, AND YOU'RE
ALL JUST AS GUILTY
FOR LAUGHING!

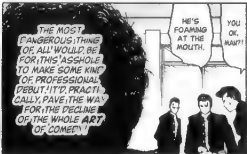
NO!
NOBODY
LOVES
COMEDY
MORE
THAN ME!



IF BY
SOME WEIRD
CHANCE THIS
GUY EVER
GETS ON TV,
I'LL FRICKIN'...
I'LL CHANGE
THE CHANNEL
WITHOUT A
SECOND
THOUGHT!



THE MOST
DANGEROUS THING
OF ALL WOULD BE
FOR THIS ASSHOLE
TO MAKE SOME KIND
OF PROFESSIONAL
DEBUT! IT'D PRACTI-
CALLY PAVE THE WAY
FOR THE DECLINE
OF THE WHOLE ART
OF COMEDY!



HE'S
FOAMING
AT THE
MOUTH.

YOU
OK,
MAN?!



WELL, IT AIN'T
GONNA BE EASY.
THOSE CROMARTIE
GUYS ARE PRETTY
HARDCORE. THEY
DON'T HAVE ANY
PROBLEM FIGHTIN'
DIRTY IF IT COMES
DOWN TO IT.



YEAH,
LIKE, HOW
DO WE EVEN
GET IN TO
CROMARTIE?

SERIOUSLY,
~~THAT'S~~ THERE'S
SOME
STUFF WE
GOTTA
TALK
ABOUT.



WON'T
ANYONE AT
LEAST
CRACK A
JOKE OR
SOMETHING?
C'MON, GET
A CLUE!

DAMN,
THESE
GUYS
JUST
KEEP
TALKING A
BLUNCH OF
BORING
CRAP



HMM...
SO HOW
ARE WE
SUPPOSED
TO GET
INTO THEIR
SCHOOL?

ESPECIALLY
THAT
TAKENOUGH.
PUSH HIM
TOO FAR
AND HE GOES
OUTTA
CONTROL.



IT'S LIKE YOU'RE
ALL A BLUNCH OF
CROMARTIANS
FROM CROMARTIE
VILLAGE!



ALL I'M HEARING
IS CROMARTIE
THIS AND
CROMARTIE
THAT, AS IF IT'S
THE ONLY THING
YOU CAN THINK
ABOUT...



IS
CROMARTIE
TOO
TOUGH
AFTER
ALL?

YAMA-
SHIRO'S
THINKIN'
ABOUT
SOME-
THING!

HMM.



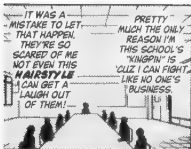
HUH?!
WHOA,
THAT WAS
PRETTY
FUNNY!



STILL, NOW'S
MY ONLY
CHANCE. IT'LL
BE TOO LATE
ONCE WE RAID
CROMARTIE.



MAN, I'D
LOVE TO
GET UP AND
TELL 'EM
THAT JOKE!
BUT IF I DID,
MY REPUTA-
TION WOULD
BE GONE IN
A FLASH.



IT WAS A
MISTAKE TO LET
THAT HAPPEN.
THEY'RE SO
SCARED OF ME
NOT EVEN THIS
HAIRSTYLE
CAN GET A
LAUGH OUT
OF THEM!

PRETTY
MUCH THE ONLY
REASON I'M
THIS SCHOOL'S
"KINGPIN" IS
'CUZ I CAN FIGHT
LIKE NO ONE'S
BUSINESS.

THAT
SETTLES
IT! AS OF
TODAY,
I QUIT BEING
THE BOSS!



I JUST
PRAY THE
GODS OF
COMEDY
ARE
SMILING
ON ME...

OK! I'M
GONNA
TELL
THAT
JOKE
RIGHT
NOW!

WHAT I REALLY
WANT TO DO IS
TELL LOTS OF
GREAT JOKES
AND MAKE
PEOPLE LAUGH
UNTIL THEY
CRY!

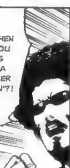


ALL I'M
HEARING IS
CROMARTIE
THIS AND
CROMARTIE
THAT, AS IF
IT'S THE ONLY
THING YOU
CAN THINK
ABOUT!

YOU'RE ALL
TALKIN', BUT
YOUR
CONVERSA-
TION'S GOING
NOWHERE!

HUH?

HEY, WHEN
ARE YOU
GUYS
GONNA
QUIT YER
BLABBIN'?



IT'S LIKE YOU'RE
ALL A BUNCH OF
CROMARTIANS
FROM FRICKIN'
CROMARTIE VILLAGE
OR SOMETHIN'!
BWAHAHA!

HEY,
YEAH!

SEE? I
TOLD YA
YAMAGUCHI
HATES
JOKES!

WHOA!

CRACK

MUST BE FRUSTRATING.

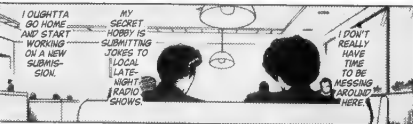
CHAPTER THIRTY-TWO. RADIO GA GA



COMMANDING DESTRADE'S 1ST YEARS IS NOBORU YAMAGUCHI. HE IS DEEP IN THOUGHT, WONDERING IF HE COULD OVERCOME THE HEAVY ATMOSPHERE WITH A BIT OF MIRTH.

THE TWO SCHOOLS ARE NOW TRULY ON THE VERGE OF WAR.

DESTRADE HIGH HAS FINALLY MADE A MOVE AGAINST CROMARTIE. THE DESTRADE GUYS HAVE INFILTRATED CROMARTIE TERRITORY.



THERE ARE A LOT OF LISTENERS WHO LOOK FORWARD TO HEARING MY JOKES. YOU COULD EVEN SAY THAT WITHOUT MY JOKES, THOSE SHOWS WOULD BE DEAD IN THE WATER.

I'M MORE OR LESS A REGULAR CONTRIBUTOR TO SEVEN DIFFERENT PROGRAMS.



THEY USED FIVE OF MY
JOKES LAST NIGHT. I
SUBMITTED SEVEN,
THOUGH, SO IT'S JUST
AVERAGE. BY THE WAY, MY
PEN NAME IS **SALTY
TARO**. A COOL NAME IF I
DO SAY SO MYSELF.



DAMN, MY
BLOOD IS
BOILING! I'M
READY TO
RUMBLE!



TO HELL
WITH
CROMARTIE!
I'M GONNA
TEAR THAT
TAKENOUCHI
TO PIECES!

BAM



AND IF
THERE'S
ONE
THING
**SALTY
TARO**
HATES,
IT'S...



THAT DAMNED
"MONEY BOY"!
HE'S ALWAYS
OUTSHINING ME
ON THE RADIO
~~SCENE!~~



HE'S
BURNED
UP, AND
SO AM I!

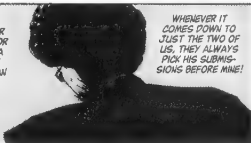


WHOA,
YAMA-
GUCHI'S
PISSSED!

I WON'T
REST UNTIL
I'VE SUR-
PASSED
HIM!

HE'S THE
ONLY OTHER
CONTRIBUTOR
WHO HAS A
SENSE OF
HUMOR I CAN
RESPECT.

WHENEVER IT
COMES DOWN TO
JUST THE TWO OF
US, THEY ALWAYS
PICK HIS SUBMIS-
SIONS BEFORE MINE!





WHERE ARE
YOU NOW,
HONEY BOY?
WHAT ARE
YOU UP TO?



MUST BE
WORRIED
ABOUT
GOING UP
AGAINST
CROMARTIE.

HE'S
UPSET
OVER
SOME-
THIN'.



MAN,
THAT'S
DESP.

BLAMMITT
JOKES TO LATE-
NIGHT RADIO
PROGRAMS
HAPPENS TO BE
A HOBBY OF
MINE.



YES, IT CAME
TO ME WHEN I
WAS IN THE
KITCHEN ONE
DAY: "HONEY
BOY."



SO LIKE,
DO YOU
HAVE A
PEN
NAME?





IT'S HONEY,
BOY! AND
HE'S GOING
TO TELL AN
ESPECIALLY
GOOD JOKE



WELL...
I CAME UP
WITH AN
ESPECIALLY
GOOD ONE
FOR THIS
WEEK'S
SHOW.



SO WHAT
KIND OF
STUFF DO
YA WRITE?
C'MON,
TELL ME!

HUH?

SIT
DOWN
AND
SHUT
THE
HELL UP!



LOOK!
THEY'RE
WEARING
CROMARTIE
UNIFORMS!



JEEZ,
WHAT'S WITH
YAMAGUCHI?
THOSE TWO
GUYS ARE
REALLY GETTIN'
TO HIM!

YOU'VE BLOWN IT THIS TIME, HONEY BOY. I'LL BET YOU NEVER EXPECTED SALTY TARO WOULD FIND YOU HERE! IT WAS A ONE-IN-A-MILLION CHANCE, BUT NOW YOUR JOKE IS AS GOOD AS MINE!

WHO THE HELL ARE THEY?

DON'T TELL ME HE'S SCARED OF 'EM!

...

whisper

WELL, I'D BE EMBARRASSED IF ANYONE ELSE HEARD, SO I'LL WHISPER IT TO YOU.

TELL IT TO ME STRAIGHT, ALRIGHT?

twip

AH HA! SO THAT'S YOU'RE LITTLE GAG, EH?

I DON'T GET IT, MAN! WHAT THE HECK'S HE DOIN'?

IT LOOKS LIKE YAMAGUCHI'S GOING TOWARD 'EM.

WHAT THE HELL DID WE EVEN COME HERE FOR?!

HUH?! BUT THE FIGHT AN'T EVEN STARTED YET!

WE'RE OUTTA HERE.

AND NOW
IT'S TIME FOR
OUR LISTENER
SUBMISSIONS!
TODAY'S
THEME IS
"BACK IN
SCHOOL."

I TOOK YOUR
JOKE AND SENT
IT EXPRESS
MAIL! THE BLOOD
WILL FREEZE IN
YOUR VEINS
WHEN YOU
HEAR THIS!

TODAY
YOU
MEET
YOUR
DOOM,
HONEY
BOY!

"AND
BOUGHT A
PORK
CUTLET!
BADA
BING!"

HERE
GOES! I
LET MYSELF
TAKE A
CUT OF THE
MONEY..."

THERE'S
JUST
ONE
THING
THAT
WORRIES
ME -

THE FIRST JOKE
IS FROM ONE OF
OUR REGULARS,
SALTY TARO!
ANOTHER ONE!
CAN YOU
BELIEVE THIS
GUYS! LET'S SEE
IF HE CAN MAKE
US LAUGH
AGAIN!

DAMN,
I WAS
RIGHT!

WOW,
THAT
SLICKED.

AND HE EVEN
SENT IT
EXPRESS...

YOU HAVE NO SENSE OF HUMOR, BUDDY.

CHARACTER INTRODUCTIONS 3

FREDDIE

In a way, he and Mechazawa are like the stars of this story. His silent demeanor gives him an almost refined air, and has won him hordes of female fans. No, I'm being serious. His real name, age, nationality and so on are all unconfirmed. The only thing we know for sure is that he has an extremely hairy chest (although in this volume, we'll also learn that he's a hard worker, though this can hardly be considered important). We have yet to see him in a fight, but his ability to scare off opponents by his appearance alone is outstanding. So is he a good fighter or isn't he?! He has a big surprise in store for us this time—later on, we'll be treated to a shocking scene of him walking around wearing nothing but an apron.

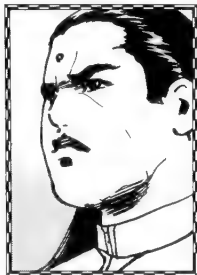


GORILLA

That's it and that's all. There's nothing else I can say. I'm supposed to be introducing the men of Cromartie, but he's not even a man. I could go ahead and say things like "His name is Hiromi Go" and "He's actually quite clean," but the more I do, the more doubts I have about my own writing. Hey, why don't *you* try writing a character profile for a gorilla?! It should be obvious he has no catchphrase. He's better at arithmetic than Hayashida. . OK, enough already!



CHARACTER INTRODUCTIONS 4



TAKESHI HOKUTO

Son in one of Japan's powerful *zaibatsu* families. His long hair and white school uniform are a bit over the top. Putting his Sovereignty Studies (whatever that is) to good use, he had planned to take over high schools throughout Japan, but this foolish aristocrat mistakenly transferred to Cromartie. "So why not transfer the hell out?" you may heckle. But Hokuto shows no signs of leaving anytime soon. Perhaps he's found his comfort zone, surrounded by all these idiots. It's still not clear if he really is rich or not. His prideful and pompous attitude has won him few friends. His catchphrase is, "The masses are pigs." Now that's going too far.



HOKUTO'S HENCHMAN

The serialized version of *Cromartie High School* is approaching its one-year anniversary, and this guy has still not been able to tell anyone his real name. His undying loyalty to Hokuto is enough to bring tears to your eyes. This dutiful (stupid, that is) fellow behaves as if Hokuto were his master, even though the two are in the same grade. His pet phrase, "Please be careful, Hokuto-san, sir," reveals this deferring nature. Compared to the other characters in this manga, he's sorely lacking in the personality department, but this actually makes him easier to fit into the story (which is why he shows up so often). He has few fans despite his great efforts to please. It's 'cuz he's got no presence!

CHAPTER THIRTY-THREE: SKY JIGI



TODAY WE'RE TAKING A
CLASS TRIP TO KYUSHU.
I LOVE VISITIN' OLD
TEMPLES AND CASTLES,
SO THIS IS SOMETHING
I'VE ALWAYS WANTED
TO DO.

I'M MOTION SI--ER,
I MEAN, YUTAKA TAKE-
NOUCHI, AND I'M THE
UNDERGROUND KINGPIN
OF THE 1ST YEARS AT
CROMARTIE. NO ONE IS
MORE RESPECTED, AND
WHEN IT COMES TO
FIGHTING ABILITY, NO
ONE CAN HOLD A
CANDLE TO ME.



I'VE BEEN TRAINING IN
PREPARATION FOR TODAY.
DON' STUFF LIKE SITTING
INSIDE PARKED CARS AND
HANGING AROUND THE
RAILWAY STATIONS,
WATCHING THE BULLET
TRAINS RACE BY, AND IT
ALL WENT PERFECTLY,
WITHOUT A
SINGLE MISHAP.

BUT IF I
WANT TO
GO ON TRIPS,
I'VE GOTTA
OVERCOME
MY SINGLE
WEAKNESS:
**MOTION
SICKNESS.**

THERE'S A
BIGGER
PROBLEM.



AND THE
TROUBLE
DOESN'T
STOP
THERE,
EITHER.

BUT I NEVER
THOUGHT WE'D BE
GON' BY **PLANE**.
BY THE TIME
I FOUND OUT, IT
WAS TOO LATE TO
DO ANYTHING. I
TRULY REGRET THIS
OVERSIGHT...

Sitting right about here



ALRIGHT,
DON'T
ANYONE
MOVE!



WE'VE BEEN
HIJACKED.

I'M DYING TO SEE
KYUSHU, BUT GETTIN' ON
A PLANE IS JUST... WELL,
IT'S MORE THAN I CAN
HANDLE. I HAVEN'T EVEN
MASTERED TRAINS OR
TAXIS YET, SO THE SKY IS
OUTTA THE QUESTION.
IT'S LIKE A HIGH SCHOOL
BASEBALL PLAYER
STEPPIN' UP TO BAT IN
THE MAJOR LEAGUE.



STILL, IT COULDA BEEN
WORSE. AT LEAST
WITH THINGS THE WAY
THEY ARE NOW, WE
CAN'T TAKE OFF. THAT
MEANS THEY'LL HAVE
TO PUT OUR SCHOOL
TRIP ON HOLD.

HM?

HEY,
BOSS. I
DUNNO IF
WE CAN
PULL THIS
OFF...

AH, WELL.
THIS HIJACKING
THING ISN'T
GONNA WORK,
ANYWAY. WE
WON'T TAKE
OFF, AND
THIS'LL BE
OVER WITH-
OUT A LOT
OF FUSS.

YEAH. IT
FELS KINDA
LIKE WE'RE
THE
HOSTAGES.

I THOUGHT IT
WAS JUST
GONNA BE SOME
KIDS ON A
SCHOOL TRIP,
BUT THESE GUYS
LOOK MORE LIKE
YAKUZA!

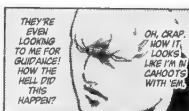
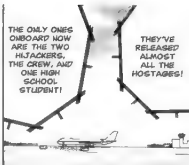
ISN'T IT
A LITTLE
EARLY TO BE
THROWIN'
IN THE
TOWEL?!

MAN, LET'S
JUST TURN
OURSELVES IN.
NOBODY'S
BEEN HURT, SO
IT WON'T BE
TOO BAD.

I CAN'T MAKE THIS DRAG
ON LONGER, EITHER. I MAY
BE BAD, BUT I AMN'T SO
LOW THAT I'D HELP OUT A
BLINCH OF CRIMINALS! NO...
IT'S MY CIVIC DUTY TO
TRY TO GET THESE
GUYS TO SURRENDER.

UH-OH. IF THIS THING IS
TAKEN CARE OF TOO
QUICKLY, WE MIGHT END UP
GOING ON THE TRIP AFTER
ALL. BUT THEY WOULDN'T
LET US GO RIGHT AFTER
BEING HIJACKED, WOULD
THEY? THEN AGAIN, I
WOULDN'T PUT IT PAST
OUR SCHOOL...





WHAT?!
NOW WAIT
A DAMN
MINUTE!

THEY
SAID
THEY'LL
DO IT.



NOT ONLY AM I MOTION
SICK, BUT I'M STILL
BEING HELD HOSTAGE,
AND IT'S MY FAULT
THESE HIJACKERS
JUST MADE OFF WITH
20 BILLION YEN!

OH GOD,
I FEEL **SO**
BAD...

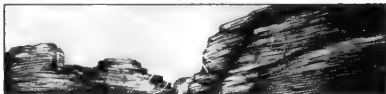
* About \$170 million U.S.

I AIN'T
YOUR
FRICKIN'
BOSS!

THE
BOSS
AIN'T
LOOKIN'
SO HOT,
MAN.

TAKE OFF THOSE MASKS ALREADY!

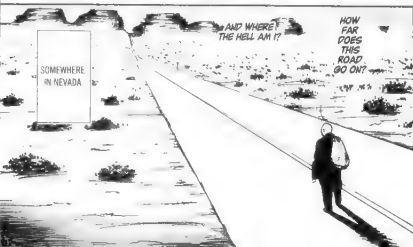
CHAPTER THIRTY-FOUR: **LIVING IN AMERICA**



MY ONLY WEAKNESS IS THAT I GET MOTION SICK REAL EASY. ANYHOW, I'M DAMN TOUGH, AND THERE'S THIS SCHOOL I WAS THE BOSS OF... BUT THAT'S ALL BEHIND ME NOW.



NOT THAT IT MATTERS RIGHT NOW, BUT MY NAME IS YUTAKA TAKEUCHI. NO ONE IS 'MORE RESPECTED, AND WHEN IT COMES TO FIGHTING ABILITY, NO ONE CAN HOLD A CANDLE TO ME.



SOMEWHERE
IN NEVADA

AND WHERE?
THE HELL AM I?

HOW
FAR
DOES
THIS
ROAD
GO ON?

I'VE BEEN ON THE RUN
FOR A WHILE NOW. I
THOUGHT ABOUT CON-
TACTING THE JAPANESE
EMBASSY AND HAVING
'EM CLEAR UP THIS
MISUNDERSTANDING SO
I COULD GO HOME... BUT
THE THING IS, I DON'T
EVER WANT TO GET ON
A PLANE AGAIN.



I WAS IN THE
WRONG PLACE
AT THE WRONG
TIME AND GOT
MISTAKEN AS A
HIJACKER.
FORTUNATELY,
I WAS ABLE TO
GET AWAY.

I'VE BEEN GETTING SOFT,
LIVING THE EASY LIFE OF A
KINGPIN. BUT NOW THAT I'M
HERE IN AMERICA, I'LL USE
THE OPPORTUNITY TO
STRENGTHEN MY MIND AND
BODY, SO THAT I CAN
HANDLE RIDING IN
VEHICLES. NO SWEAT.
ONCE I'VE TOUGHENED
MYSELF UP, I'LL GO HOME
BADDIER THAN EVER!



WHO
KNOWS,
MAYBE
THIS IS
SOME KIND
OF "TEST"
I'VE BEEN
GIVEN.

THE MEDIA
DOESN'T CARE,
THOUGH. THE
WAY THINGS
ARE NOW, I
WOULDN'T
EVEN BE ABLE
TO EXPLAIN
MYSELF.



I NEVER
DID ANY-
THING TO
DESERVE
ALL THE
BLAME

I BET
THINGS ARE
PRETTY
CRAZY BACK
THERE.

THE
COPS ARE
PROBABLY
LOOKIN' ALL
OVER THE
PLACE FOR
THOSE
HIJACKERS.



BUT I'LL CONTINUE ON,
IN THE HOPE THAT ONE
DAY THEY'LL ALL KNOW
THE TRUTH. HMM.
I WONDER WHY A HIGH
SCHOOL STUDENT LIKE
ME IS THINKING ALL
THIS STUFF...



THAT'S HOW SOCIETY
IS. IT'S ALWAYS
ABOUT THE PUBLIC AT
LARGE, AND TO HELL
WITH THE INDIVIDUAL.

SOUND'S LIKE LAST
WEEK WAS PRETTY
ROUGH FOR YOU GUYS.
IT'S TOO BAD THE
PLANE WAS HIJACKED
WHEN YOU WERE
ABOUT TO SET OFF ON
YOUR CLASS TRIP.



WELL,
LUCKILY
NOBODY
WAS HURT.

I'M AFRAID I
DON'T KNOW
THE DETAILS.
SINCE I WAS
OUT WITH A
COLD THAT
DAY.

I WAS
THINKING
THE SAME
THING, EVEN
THOUGH I
WASN'T
THERE WITH
YOU.

HEY, IS IT
JUST ME OR
DO ANY OF
YOU FEEL
LIKE WE'VE
FORGOTTEN
SOMETHIN'?

THERE HASN'T
BEEN A THING
ABOUT IT ON
THE NEWS. I
SUPPOSE THAT
MEANS THE
STORY HAS
GARNERED NO
INTEREST

DID THEY
EVER GET
THE
HIJACKERS?

HEY,
YOU'RE
RIGHT!

WE
NEVER
GOT OUR
MONEY
BACK
FOR THE
TRIP!

THAT'S
IT!

THEY'RE
PROBABLY ALL
TALKIN' ABOUT
ME AT SCHOOL
RIGHT NOW.

NEVADA
(8 00 PM)



HEH.
NOW I'M
STARTING
TO FEEL
LONELY.
TYPICAL.



I THINK I'LL JUST
CAMP HERE FOR
THE NIGHT.



I'M SO
TIRED
I CAN'T
TAKE
ANOTHER
STEP.



I WONDER IF THOSE
HIJACKERS WERE ABLE
TO MAKE A CLEAN
GETAWAY. THIS IS ALL
THEIR FAULT, BUT FOR
SOME REASON I CAN'T
REALLY HOLD IT
AGAINST THEM.

THE STARS
SURE ARE
BEAUTIFUL

.....



DAMN THIS
AIN'T LIKE ME
GETTIN' ALL
SENTIMENTAL
AND CRAP

I WONDER IF MY
FRIENDS BACK
IN JAPAN ARE
LOOKING AT
THESE SAME
STARS RIGHT
NOW

NOT TO CHANGE THE
SUBJECT, BUT THERE'S A BIG
TIME DIFFERENCE BETWEEN
JAPAN AND AMERICA LIKE, IF
IT'S NIGHTTIME IN AMERICA,
THEN IT'S THE MIDDLE OF THE
AFTERNOON IN JAPAN! SO, IF
YOU WERE IN AMERICA
LOOKING AT THE NIGHT SKY,
I'D BE TAKING MY AFTER-
NOON NAP HERE!

JAPAN
(1:00 PM)

LOOK, WHAT
I WANNA KNOW IS
WHETHER WE'RE
GETTIN' OUR
DAMN MONEY
FOR THE TRIP
BACK OR NOT!

BEATS ME.
GUESS I JUST
WANTED TO
SHOW THAT I
KNOW A THING
OR TWO 'BOUT
ASTRONOMY

AND WHO
DOESN'T
KNOW
THAT?

WHERE
DID THAT
COME
FROM?

WHO'S
"THEY"?
THE
HIJACKERS?

ON THE OTHER
HAND, THEY
STOPPED THE
TRIP ON US, SO
WE SHOULD
GET A FULL
REFUND!

YOU JUST
SKIPPED SCHOOL
'CUZ YOU FELT
LIKE IT, YA FREAK!
YOU SHOULD BE
HAPPY YOU
GOT THAT
MUCH BACK!

I WAS OUT
SICK THAT
DAY, AND HAD
TO CANCEL ON
SHORT NOTICE.
I WAS ONLY
REFUNDED
HALF OF MY
FARE...



AND HIS NAME SHALL BE MASKED TAKENOUCHI.

CHAPTER THIRTY-FIVE. LET IT BE



YEAH!
WE GOT
TAKENOUCHI!
TELL US
WHAT TO
DO, MAN!

YEAH!
THAT'S
RIGHT!

WE HAVE
TAKENOUCHI-
KUN ON OUR
SIDE!

...

MASKED TAKENOUCHI

(ACTUALLY ONE OF THE HIJACKERS)

BUT HOW COULD I HAVE
KNOWN THAT TAKENOUCHI
WAS THE TOUGHEST
BADASS OF THEM ALL?!
WELL, I GOTTA THINK OF
SOMETHING TO SAY TO
THEM. I'M REALLY SHY
AROUND PEOPLE, BUT I
CAN'T WORRY ABOUT
THAT NOW!

CRAP. I GET THE
FEELING I'M IN
OVER MY HEAD.
I ONLY PRETENDED
I WAS IN HIGH
SCHOOL SO I COULD
AVOID GETTING
ARRESTED...

IT'S
KINDA
SCARY
NO ONE
NOTICED.

WE'RE ALL ON
THE VERGE OF
ADULTHOOD,
RIGHT? WELL,
WHAT'S WRONG
WITH ACTING
LIKE IT?

WHOA,
HOLD
ON A
SECOND!

HOW
MANY
GUYS
WILL YA
KILL THIS
TIME?

AND I'LL TELL YOU
WHAT WORRIES ME
THE MOST--THE
COPS! I MEAN, IF WE
RUN INTO TROUBLE
WITH THEM OVER
SOME STUPID
FIGHT...WELL, IT
AIN'T NO LAUGHING
MATTER!



I'M SAYING,
WE'RE A LITTLE
OLD FOR
FIGHTING. WE
SHOULD TRY
ACTING MORE,
YOU KNOW,
ADULT

WHAT
THE HELL
ARE YOU
SAYIN'?



I CAN'T TELL
YOU WHY, BUT
LET'S JUST
SAY IF THEY
CATCH ME NOW,
I'D PROBABLY
GET 20 YEARS.



YOU GUYS
JUST DON'T
GET IT. IF YOU
GOT IN
TROUBLE WITH
THE COPS, IT'D
BE A TOTALLY
DIFFERENT
STORY THAN
IF I DID.

BUT IF WE
LET THAT
SCARE US,
WE WON'T
GET TO
FIGHT!

WE'RE
ALL
AFRAID
OF THE
COPS,
MAN.



YOU GUYS ARE
STILL YOUNG.
YOU HAVE
FUTURES...
I DON'T WANT
TO LEAD YOU
DOWN THE
SAME LOUSY
PATH I'M ON!



RIGHT.
SO I
CAN'T
JUST GO
RUNNING
INTO
FIGHTS.

MAN, YOU
ARE ON A
DIFFERENT
LEVEL!

YOU MUST
HAVE A
HELL OF A
RECORD
FOR A 16-
YEAR-
OLD!



BUT IF WE
GAVE UP
FIGHTING,
THERE'D BE
NOTHING LEFT
FOR US! WHAT
WOULD WE DO
THEN?!



PEOPLE
CHANGE.
THAT'S
JUST
HOW IT
IS.

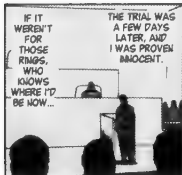
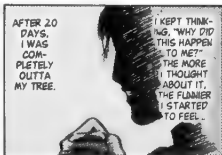
IS HE
ANOTHER
PERSON?

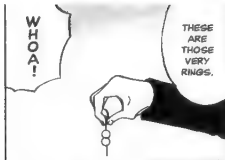
YEAH!
YOU'RE
LIKE
ANOTHER
PERSON!

SOUNDS
LIKE
HE'S
IN HIS
30S

DAMN,
DUDE!
YOU'VE
REALLY
CHANGED.









THE GORILLA'S NAME IS HIROMI GO.

CHAPTER THIRTY-SIX: SEARCH FOR A SIDENICK

DAMMIT! I
HATE YOU,
POOTAN!

POOTAN
CAN'T PLAY.
HE'S FILING
HIS TAX
RETURN.

POOTAN!
C'MON,
LET'S
PLAY!

IF ANYONE'S
MAKING MONEY
OFF THIS
PROGRAM, IT'S
A DAMN CRIME.

hey,
why are we
all watching
TV?

DETRADE HIGH KINCIN
NOBORU YAMAGUCHI
(THE MARRIAGE COMEDIAN)

WHAT A
JAIL OF
CRAP

I'LL TELL
YOU THIS, THOUGH--
PULL WHATEVER
NUMBERS YOU WANT,
BUT WITHOUT MY
APPROVAL YOU'RE
NOTHING BUT TRASH!

THIS
GARBAGE
ACTUALLY
GETS GOOD
RATINGS.
TOO!

POOTAN IS
THE BEST!

MAN,
THAT
SHOW'S
FUNNY!

HA
HA!

TELEVISION IS
AS GOOD AS
DEAD. MY ONLY
CHOICE NOW IS
TO BECOME A
PERFORMER AND
PUT AN END TO
THIS ERA OF
IGNORANCE.

ISHIKAWA
GOT
SMACKED
AGAIN!

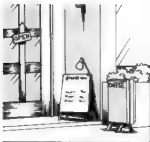
KICKED
HIM
RIGHT
ON THE
CHIN...

HE
MUST
HATE
HIM.

CRACK

ONCE I MAKE MY
DEBUT, I'LL BE MORE
CONCERNED WITH
HOW THE PUBLIC
RECEIVES ME THAN
WITH HOW MUCH
I'M PAID.

HMM, IF I CAN FIND A
SIDEKICK TO COMPLEMENT
THE POWER OF MY
AMAZING HUMOR, IT'LL
GET THE AUDIENCE EVEN
MORE INVOLVED.



IN THAT CASE,
THERE'S ONLY **ONE**
MAN WHO IS
WORTHY!



YEAH,
EVER
SINCE THE
HIJACKING

TAKE-
MUCHI
HAS LOST
WEIGHT.
HUH?

PROTAGONIST
TAKASHI KAMIYAMA
(AKA "HONEY BOY")



HAHA!
IT'S
PROBABLY
JUST
YOUR
IMAGI-
NATION.

I GET THE
FEELING
SOMEONE'S
FOLLOWING
US AROUND.

THERE'S
ONE OTHER
THING
THAT'S
BEEN
BUGGIN'
ME...



I KNOW HIS
TRUE IDENTITY
(HONEY BOY),
BUT IF SOME GUY
I DIDN'T KNOW CAME
UP AND SAID, "WE'D
MAKE AN AWESOME
COMEDIC DUO," I'D
PROBABLY BACK
THE HELL OFF.



THE PROBLEM
IS, HOW DO
I APPROACH
HIM?

HE COULD TRY
TO CLAIM THE
RIGHT TO LEAD
OUR COMEDY
DUO! NO, IT'S NOT
A GOOD IDEA TO
REVEAL MYSELF
AFTER ALL.



I COULD ALWAYS
TELL HIM THAT
I'M **SALTY
TARO**, BUT THE
PROBLEM THERE
IS THAT HE
RANKS HIGHER
THAN ME ON THE
LATE-NIGHT
RADIO SCENE.



BUT RECENTLY, THE
TREND HAS BEEN FOR
A COMEDIAN TO HAVE
A SIDEKICK THAT IS A
FORMER CLASSMATE,
OR SOMEONE FROM
HIS THEATER GROUP.



BACK IN THE
DAY, THE
AGENTS USED
TO DECIDE
WHO'D BE A
COMEDIAN'S
PARTNER

WAIT A
MINUTE...



NOT JUST
THAT, BUT HE
GOES TO A
RIVAL SCHOOL—
THE ONE WE'RE
IN A FELD WITH
RIGHT NOW!

BUT HE
DOESN'T
EVEN GO TO
THE SAME
SCHOOL
AS ME.

TWO PEOPLE WITH
NOTHING IN COMMON
MEET AND END UP
BECOMING A COMEDY
DUO. HOW DRAMATIC
IS THAT?! IT'LL ALL
JUST BE PART OF
THE LEGEND ONCE
WE MAKE IT BIG.



HISTORIC PERSONALITIES FEATURES
NOBORU YAMAGUCHI,
performer

YAMAGUCHI
INDULGES
IN A LITTLE
DAYDREAMING

WOW,
WHAT AN
AMAZING
CONCI-
DENCE!

WELL,
YBS,
I DID.

SO YOU JUST
RAN INTO MR.
HONEY AT A
COFFEE SHOP
ONE DAY?

HOW EMBARRASSING.
I HAVEN'T EVEN DEBUTED,
AND ALREADY I'M DREAM-
ING OF BEING FAMOUS!
DO YOU WANT TO BE A
GREAT PERFORMER OR A
MERE POP ICON?!

(HE ASKED HIMSELF)

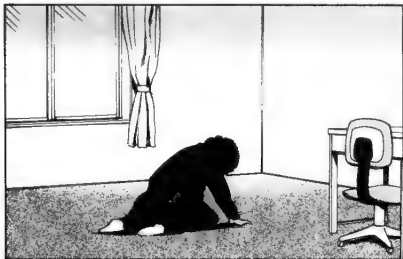
NO! WHAT
AM I DOING,
DREAMING
UP THAT
KINDA
CRAP?!

AND I'M NOT
GOING TO BEAT
AROUND THE
BUSH! THERE'S
NO NEED FOR
ME TO PLAY IT
ALL COOL
LIKE THAT!

THE FIRST
THING I GOTTA
DO IS CREATE
A COMEDY
TEAM WITH
HONEY BOY!

いよし!!
いくぞ!!
OK! HERE
GOES!

カ
チ
...
チ



POOTAN SURE IS FUNNY, ISN'T HE?

CHAPTER THIRTY-SEVEN: THE TWO ARE IDOLS





DESTRADE HIGH 51 YEAR BOSS
NOBORU YAMAGUCHI



I GIVE UP!
WHY ARE
YOU ALWAYS
SO MEAN,
POOTAN?

HEY, IT
AIN'T
POOTAN'S
PROBLEM.
POOO!



THIS CRAP IS
NOT FUNNY. NOT
ONE DAMN BIT!

I'M GIVING
THIS PROGRAM
ANOTHER LOOK,
AND I STILL
THINK...



How to the show?
How's your chance to catch up!

POOTAN
YOUR GUIDE TO THE SHOW

I EVEN
BOUGHT
THE BOOK.



BUT, ONLY
AN AMATEUR
WOULD, JUST
WRITE IT OFF
BY SAYING "IT
SUCKS", AND
LEAVE IT
AT THAT.

IF I'M SERIOUS
ABOUT BEING A
PRO
ENTERTAINER, I
NEED TO FIGURE
OUT WHAT IT IS
ABOUT THIS
SHOW THAT
MAKES IT SUCH
A HIT.

I'LL FIND
THE SECRET
TO ITS POPU-
LARITY,
AND I WON'T
OVERLOOK
EVEN THE
SMALLEST
DETAIL!

THEN
THERE'S
GOT
TO BE
SOME-
THING
ABOUT
IT!



ANYHOW,
IF THIS
ABOMINATION
IS ENOUGH TO
MAKE EVEN
THAT GENIUS
HONEY BOY
LAUGH...

NO, THIS
TIME IT
WAS
SOMEONE
I DO
KNOW!



ANOTHER
GUY YOU
DIDN'T
KNOW?

HEY, POOTANI!
SOMEBODY
CAME UP TO
ME AGAIN
WHILE I WAS
IN TOWN
TODAY!



BUT NOW I'M
ALL WORRIED,
BECAUSE
I CUT THE
CONVERSATION
SHORT AND
RAN AWAY!



YEAH.
STUFF LIKE
THAT
HAPPENS
ALL THE
TIME. MAKES
THINGS REAL
AWKWARD.
POOO...

WELL,
THIS TIME
I FORGOT
THE
PERSON'S
NAME.



THEN
WHAT'S
WRONG?

UH, YEAH.
I CAN'T
REALLY
TALK ABOUT
IT, THOUGH...



AH, AN
ASSOCIATE.
HEY, WAIT
A MINUTE!
YOU MEAN
YOU HAVE A
J-JOB?

IF IT HAD BEEN A
CHILDHOOD FRIEND, OR
SOMEONE REALLY CLOSE
TO ME, I WOULDN'T WORRY
ABOUT HOW I SPOKE TO
HIM. BUT THIS WAS
SOMEONE I KNEW FROM
WORK, SO I HAD TO BE
POLITE--I JUST DIDN'T
KNOW HOW POLITE!





NO?
WHY
NOT?

BUT IT'S
NOT LIKE
THAT,
POOTANI!



WELL, IF YOU THINK
ABOUT IT, YOU ARE
PRETTY RUDE.
FORGETTING PEOPLE'S
NAMES AND ALL...



SAY,
WHAT IS
HIS NAME
ANYHOW?

↑
Voiceover

BWAHAHA!
THAT'S A
GOOD ONE!
POOO!

HE CALLED
ME "TARO-
KUN," OR
SOMETHING!



BECAUSE
THAT
PERSON
GOT MY
NAME
WRONG!



I JUST DON'T
GET THIS
GARBAGE!
WHAT IS IT
WITH THIS
DAMN SHOW?

AND WHAT
ARE THOSE TWO
SUPPOSED TO BE?



BUT IF I JUST
GO SAYING
STUFF LIKE
THAT, PEOPLE
WILL THINK I'M
NOT "WITH IT."



BWAM

MAN, I GOTTA STOP WHINING TO MYSELF. I'LL JUST END UP SOUNDING LIKE SOME CRUSTY OLD PERFORMER WHO'S BITTER ABOUT THE ONES WHO MADE IT BIG.



THIS IS LIKE TORTURE.

WHAT A WORLD...

IF SOMETHING SUCKS, WHY CAN'T A MAN JUST SAY IT SUCKS?



AH!



GET A GRIP! I THINK! THERE **MUST** BE SOME REASON THIS SHOW IS SO POPULAR!



NOT THAT I'D EVER SAY THAT CRAP'S **CUTE**, BUT THE FACT IS CHILDREN HAVE ALWAYS BEEN FASCINATED WITH WEIRD OR FUNNY-LOOKING THINGS...AND THEY SAY THERE'S A KID INSIDE EVERYONE!



THAT'S IT! THE SECRET BEHIND THIS SHOW'S POPULARITY MUST BE THOSE STUFFED ANIMAL OUTFITS! STRANGE COSTUMES LIKE THAT HAVE AN ALMOST UNIVERSAL APPEAL...

YEAH. IF I LOOK AT IT THAT WAY, I'VE GOT NOTHING TO FEAR. OK! TIME TO PULL MYSELF TOGETHER AND KEEP WATCHING!



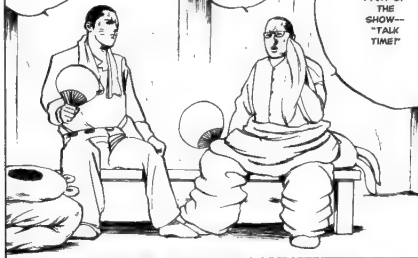
ALRIGHT, THEN! FOR THE MOMENT, I'LL ACCEPT THAT THIS SHOW IS POPULAR BECAUSE OF THOSE **OUTFITS**, AND NOT THE TWO GUYS INSIDE.



NOT
REALLY.

SO, UH,
ANYTHING
YOU FEEL LIKE
TALKING
ABOUT
TODAY?

AND NOW
IT'S TIME
FOR
EVERY-
ONE'S
FAVORITE
PART OF
THE
SHOW--
"TALK
TIME!"

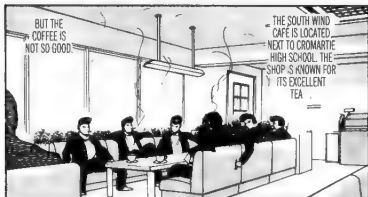


THEY TOOK
THEM OFF...



I WANNA WATCH POOTAN!

CHAPTER THIRTY-EIGHT: HELLO, GOODBYE



KITAO ASAKURA (45) IS THE OWNER OF THIS ESTABLISHMENT. HE HAS RUN THE CAFE SINCE IT OPENED 20 YEARS AGO, WITHOUT A SINGLE DAY OFF FROM WORK.



WHICH IS TO SAY THAT MR. ASAKURA HAS DEALT WITH THE TOUGH GUYS OF CROMARTIE HIGH EVERY DAY FOR THE PAST TWO DECADES



I'VE
BECOME
AN OLD MAN
WITHOUT
EVEN
REALIZING
IT.

HOW
TIME
FLIES...

MY
WORD,
HAS IT
BEEN 20
YEARS
ALREADY?

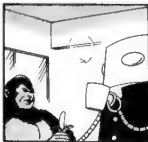


WELL,
TIMES MAY
CHANGE, BUT
IF THERE'S
ONE THING
THAT STAYS
THE SAME,
IT'S THOSE
"BAPASSES."



WHAT'S
MORE, I'VE
GOT ANOTHER
OLD MAN
WORKING
HERE PART-
TIME...

YOU
WORK
HERE
NOW?



NO MATTER,
I THINK OF THESE
YOUNG MEN AS
MY OWN SONS...



ON THE OTHER
HAND, PERHAPS
THINGS HAVE
CHANGED A BIT.



YOU
WANT A
PIECE OF
ME?!

C'MON
ASSHOLE!
I'LL
FRICKIN'
KILL YA!



HUH? I H-
HOW DID
YOU KNOW
THAT?!

YOU TWO MUST
HAVE JUST
REALIZED YOU'RE
BOTH DATING
THE SAME GIRL.

OH, UH,
SORRY,
GIR.

EASY
THERE,
LADS.

I'VE BEEN AROUND
WELL OVER 45
YEARS, BOY. ALL
IT TAKES IS A
GLANCE AND I CAN
TELL WHAT
YOU'RE THINKING.
HEH HEH.

WHAT? I
CAN
TELL
JUST BY
LOOKING
AT OUR
FACES?

HEH, IT'S
WRITTEN
ALL OVER
YOUR
FACES.



YUP.
A QUICK
GLANCE AT
YOUR...
FACES...



WELL, I SEE ALL
KIND'S COME IN
HERE. THAT'S
WHAT MAKES
BEING AROUND
RUFFIANS SO
INTERESTING.



HM. NO, I DON'T
SUPPOSE I
COULD FIGURE
THAT ONE OUT.
(WHAT'S HE
SUPPOSED TO
BE, ANYWAY?)



THERE'S THIS GIRL
WHO KINDA TOLD
ME SHE LIKES ME,
AND...WELL, I DON'T
REALLY LIKE HER
SO MUCH, BUT I
MEAN...I DON'T
WANT TO BE RUDE
OR ANYTHING.



YES?

UH,
EXCUSE
ME.

DON'T YOU
THINK THE
WAY YOU'RE
ACTING
RIGHT NOW
COULD HURT
HER THE
MOST?



AH, SO
THAT YOU
WON'T
HURT HER
FEELINGS...

IS THERE,
LIKE, A
GOOD
WAY TO
TURN HER
DOWN?



A REAL
MAN,
HUH?

IF A REAL
MAN DOESN'T
LIKE A GIRL,
THEN HE'LL
TELL IT TO HER
STRAIGHT, "I'M
NOT INTER-
ESTED."



SEEMS TO ME
YOU'RE WORRIED
ABOUT MAKIN'
YOURSELF LOOK
GOOD--AND
THAT'S EXACTLY
THE KIND OF
THINKING THAT
CAN HURT
OTHERS.

HUH?



MOST PEOPLE DON'T
WANT NOTHIN' TO DO
WITH PUNKS LIKE US,
BUT YOU'RE
DIFFERENT. WE CAN
RELY ON YOU MORE
THAN OUR STINKIN'
TEACHERS, OR EVEN
OUR PARENTS.

THANKS A
LOT, MR.
ASAKURA.
YOU REALLY
KNOW YOUR
STUFF.



CERTAINLY!
YOU'RE
ALWAYS
WELCOME
HERE. TAKE
CARE, NOW!

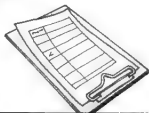
MAYBE IF I
STOP BY
AGAIN
TOMORROW?



AH, STOP
IT. I'M
JUST A
RAMBLING
OLD MAN.



THEY MIGHT LOOK
ROUGH ON THE
OUTSIDE, BUT IF YOU
JUST TALK TO THEM,
THEY'RE REALLY NOT
SUCH BAD KIDS. WHEN
I SEE THOSE GUYS
SMILE, IT REALLY MAKES
ME GLAD I OPENED
THIS CAFE.



THE ONLY
THING IS,
THEY'VE NEVER
ONCE PAID
THEIR TABS...

BADASSES WILL BE BADASSES.

CHAPTER THIRTY-NINE: BEAUTIFUL NAME

THE ONLY THING IS,
TAKENOUCHI'S BEEN
SKIPPIN' SCHOOL A
LOT... HE'S BEEN
BLOWIN' US OFF,
TOO. SO WE'RE
GONNA NEED YOUR
HELP, HAGIWARA.
YOU'RE OUR
SCHOOL'S #2 MAN.

YEAH!
WE'LL
TEACH 'EM
NEVER TO
SCREW
WITH US
AGAIN!

OK, LET'S
GO PUT
THE SMACK
DOWN ON
BAGG!

AAH.

WE ALL
KNOW HOW
TOUGH YOU
ARE. WILL YA
HELP US?!

LEAVE IT
TO ME.

BASS,
HUH?

WE CAN'T DO IT
WITHOUT YOU,
HAGIWARA! IF
YOU LEAD,
EVERY ONE OF
US WILL BACK
YOU UP!

I'M SO
GLAD HE'S
ON OUR
SIDE!

I KNEW WE
COULD
COUNT ON
HAGIWARA!

THEY
ALL
LOVE
ME...

I'VE BEEN
BUILDIN'
UP A
REPUTATION
FOR MYSELF,
SLOW AND
STEADY,
FIGHT BY
FIGHT.

LOOKS LIKE I
FINALLY HAVE
SOME RESPECT
HERE AT
GORMARTINE



Yes

萩原

OGIWARA

IT'S JUST,
MY NAME IS
OGIWARA.
NOT HAGIWARA.

No

萩原

HAGIWARA



YEAH!
WE'LL HAVE
HAGIWARA
DECIDE!

LET'S GO
OVER THE
PLAN WITH
HAGIWARA
FIRST.



THEY'VE BEEN
CALLIN' ME
HAGIWARA SINCE
ELEMENTARY
SCHOOL. PEOPLE
USED TO COME
UP TO ME AND
ASK, "IS YOUR
NAME OGIWARA
OR HAGIWARA?"
SOMETIMES I'D
GET SO CON-
FUSED, I WASN'T
SURE MYSELF.



NOW THAT
THEY'RE ALL
WORKED UP,
IT'D BE KINDA
HARD TO BREAK
IT TO 'EM THAT
MY NAME'S
ACTUALLY
OGIWARA...





IT'S
YOUR
CALL,
HAGI-
WARA!

WE'RE
COUNTIN'
ON YA,
OGIWARA!

IT'S UP
TO YOU,
HAGI-
WARA!



WITH
HAGIWARA
ON OUR SIDE,
WE'LL BE AS
STRONG AS
100 MEN! BASS
IS FINISHED!



HUH?! HOLD ON
A SECOND. DID
SOMEONE JUST
CALL ME OGIWARA?!



NO WAY! HAVE
THEY KNOWN IT'S
"OGIWARA" ALL
ALONG, AND
JUST DON'T
GIVE A DAMN?!



WHAT'S
GOIN'
ON?

ALRIGHT,
CAN YOU
ALL LISTEN
UP FOR A
MINUTE?



HMM, I'VE
GOTTA DO
SOMETHIN' TO
LET THESE
GUY'S KNOW
WHAT MY REAL
NAME IS...



EVERYONE'S GOING
TO REMEMBER IT AS
THE "LEGEND OF
HAGIWARA," AND
THAT'S NOT COOL.
IT'S **COMPLETELY**
DIFFERENT FROM
THE "LEGEND OF
OGIWARA."

CRAP,
EVEN IF WE
COMPLETELY
DESTROY
BASE JUMP
I BECOME A
LEGEND...

LISTEN, I'VE BEEN
WONDERIN' WHETHER
I SHOULD SAY THIS
OR NOT, BUT
I FINALLY DECIDED.

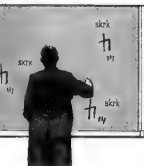
HUH?
NOW
WHAT?

WAIT.

TRY NOT
TO BE
SURPRISED,
BUT THE
TRUTH IS, MY
NAME'S NOT
"HAGIWARA."

TELL US
WHAT,
MAN?

I'M SORRY TO
BE TELLING
YOU GUYS
NOW, BUT IF I
DON'T, I'M
GONNA END UP
REGRETTIN' IT.



THAT IS
MY REAL
NAME!

萩原

I DON'T
THINK YOU
GUYS
UNDER-
STAND.

M-
MORE?

HEY, YEAH.
I HEARD
~~SOMETHING~~
'BOUT THAT A
LONG TIME
AGO...LIKE, A LOT
OF KANJI HAVE
TWO PRONUNCI-
ATIONS, OR
EVEN MORE!

NO, YOU'RE
MISREADING
ONE OF THE
KANJI.

DUDE,
IT SAYS
HAGIWARA.

WHAT THE
HELL KINDA
NAME IS
THAT?!

YOUR
NAME IS
HAGI...
HAGIGEN!

HMM. WE'RE
READIN' IT
WRONG,
HUH?

I DON'T THINK
IT'S THAT
THEY HATE ME
OR ANYTHING...

Madda

WHY DON'T
YOUR FRIENDS
EVER COME
RESCUE YOUR
ASS?

GO GET 'EM, HAGIGEN.

CHARACTER INTRODUCTIONS 5

YUTAKA TAKENOUCHI

Boss of the 1st year students of Cromartie. Champion for those who suffer from motion sickness. In terms of respect and fighting ability, he is first class. The only reason he enrolled at Cromartie is because it's close to his house, so he can avoid having to commute by vehicle. In contrast to his appearance, Takenouchi has actually proven himself to be quite intelligent. His catchphrase is, "I don't feel so good..." Surprisingly, many people have become Takenouchi fans because they, too, get motion sick and can "feel his pain." I think that's hilarious! Right now, Takenouchi is wandering around America somewhere. Both the editor and yours truly had at one point forgotten to bring him back to the story. I have no idea where he's going or when he'll be coming home



NOBORU YAMAGUCHI

Top dog of Destrade Industrial High School's 1st year class. Also head of the bike gang, "Earth, Wind and Fire." He makes one heck of a statement with that magnificent afro. Once you see it, you'll never forget it. Yamaguchi is a regular contributor to a local late night radio show, and even though he's submitted many jokes, he can never seem to top Kamiyama, his most respected rival. His pen name, incidentally, is "Salty Taro." What the heck kind of name is that? His love of comedy and pursuit of comedic knowledge are admirable, but one must wonder if he doesn't have the worst sense of humor of all. His catchphrase is, "We're outta here."



CHARACTER INTRODUCTIONS 6



JACKSON SETOUCHI

He is in control of the 1st year students at Bass High School. He has an almost presidential-looking face. His name might imply that he has some non-Japanese blood running through his veins, but it actually doesn't hold any significance. I just gave him that name on a whim. Jackson is a conscientious kingpin, one who meets regularly with his subordinates. It's charming to see all those badasses get together for their meetings. His fatal flaw is that he just doesn't stand out as much as I had hoped, so I don't have too many opportunities to use him in the story. He does have a striking name, though. (LOL)



AKIO TAKEJO

He is a delinquent who wears glasses—a rare find in this manga. He is 2nd in command of the Bass 1st years, and comes across as quite shrewd; some would even say that Bass would be unable to function without him. Akio is the type of guy who stresses over details, sometimes so much that he misses the big picture. If a guy like this can be considered “shrewd,” then Bass must really be on a different level...just not necessarily a HIGHER one. No wonder they're Cromartie's rival school.

CHAPTER FORTY: WHEN DOVES CRY

MY NAME IS MASKED
TAKENOUCHI. I WAS A
HIJACKER, BUT NOW
I'M PRETENDING TO BE
TAKENOUCHI-KUN.

SEE
YOU
LATER!

OK, I'M
GOIN'!

TAKENOUCHI

ANYHOW, I'M A
WANTED FELON,
SO UNTIL THINGS
SETTLE DOWN,
I NEED TO KEEP A
LOW PROFILE...AND
STUDY HARD. I'VE
GOT SOME TESTS
COMING UP.

NOBODY
REALIZES I'M
AN IMPOSTER,
NOT EVEN HIS
PARENTS,
WHICH KIND
OF FREAKS
ME OUT.

NOW THAT I
THINK ABOUT IT,
IS THERE REALLY
ANY NEED FOR
ME TO BE GOING
TO SCHOOL?

.....

I STOPPED GOING
TO SCHOOL. THESE
DAYS I'VE BEEN
SPENDING A LOT
OF MY TIME HERE
AT THE PARK.

AFTER
REALIZING
THAT...

I LIKE THESE DOVES, TOO. I NOW UNDERSTAND WHY THEY'RE SYMBOLS OF PEACE--THEY HELP TO QUIET THE TURMOIL IN MY MIND. I'VE DECIDED TO NEVER GO BACK TO HITJACKING AGAIN.

C-COO

COO

WONDER HOW HE'S DOING. MAYBE HE'S ABROAD @ SOMEWHERE, ON THE RLB1 BECAUSE THE COPS THINK HE'S ME...

YOU KNOW, MAYBE IT WOULDN'T BE SO BAD IF I CONTINUED BEING A HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT, LIVING MY LIFE THE RIGHT WAY THIS TIME. I FEEL KINDA BAD FOR THE REAL TAKENOUCHI-KUN, THOUGH.

IT'S UNUSUAL TO FIND A YOUNGSTER LIKE YOU THESE DAYS--ONE THAT HAS MANNERS.

GOOD MORNING, SR. IT'S NICE TO SEE YOU AS WELL.

WELL, IF IT ISN'T MY STUDENT FRIEND! WE MEET AGAIN.

WELL, I THINK IT'S JUST WONDERFUL. YOU'RE A SPLENDID YOUNG MAN.

I...I'M ONLY DOING AS I SHOULD, SR.

THE TRUTH IS, I'VE DONE A LOT OF TERRIBLE THINGS IN MY TIME. I'M NOT PROUD OF THE LIFE I'VE LIVED, AND I... I DON'T DESERVE TO BE OUT LIKE THIS, WALKING AROUND IN THE DAYLIGHT.

YOU THINK TOO HIGHLY OF ME, SIR.

REALLY? I NEVER WOULD HAVE IMAGINED. STILL, I THINK THAT WHAT I'VE DONE IS PROBABLY WORSE, SO BAD THAT I CAN'T EVEN TELL YOU.

I USED TO BE QUITE THE HOODLUM IN MY YOUNGER DAYS. EXTORTION, BRAWLING... I DID IT ALL.

I DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU'VE DONE, BUT I CAN TELL YOU THAT YOU'RE NOT ALONE. I'VE DONE SOME PRETTY TERRIBLE THINGS MYSELF.

...

BUT YOU HAVE AN HONEST FACE—THE FACE OF A MAN WHO WILL BE GREAT ONE DAY.

THE TRUTH IS, ALL PEOPLE ARE **WEAK**—SO WEAK THAT EVEN A **GOOD** PERSON LIKE YOU COULD CONVINCE HIMSELF HE'S NO GOOD.

STILL, THAT OLD MAN'S HEART WAS IN THE RIGHT PLACE. IT'S BEEN A WHILE SINCE I'VE MET SOMEONE LIKE THAT... SOMEONE SO DOWN TO EARTH.

I COULDN'T BRING MYSELF TO TELL HIM THAT I'M WEARING A **MASK**.



HUH?

HEY, WE'VE
~~BEEN~~
LOOKIN' ALL
OVER FOR
YA!

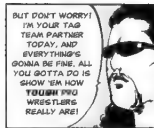


ALRIGHT, THEN!
I'VE GOT A FRESH
START, AND I'M
GOING TO MAKE
THE MOST OF IT.
I'M GOING TO BE
THE MODEL
CITIZEN, AND LIVE
A LIFE OF PEACE
AND QUIET!



GOT A
LITTLE
SCARED,
DID YA?
HAPPENS
TO ROOKIES
ALL THE
TIME...

WH-WHAT
ARE YOU
TALKING
ABOUT?



BUT DON'T WORRY!
I'M YOUR TAG
TEAM PARTNER
TODAY, AND
EVERYTHING'S
GONNA BE FINE. ALL
YOU GOTTA DO IS
SHOW 'EM HOW
TOUGH PRO
WRESTLERS
REALLY ARE!



MATCH?!

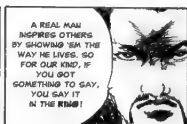
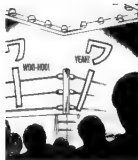
BETTER
HURRY. THE
MATCH IS
STARTIN'
SOON.



YEAH, RIGHT!
WHAT PLANET'S
GOT HIGH
SCHOOL
STUDENTS
WHO LOOK
LIKE YOU?!

I'M JUST AN
ORDINARY
HIGH SCHOOL
STUDENT.

UM, IT
SEEMS
YOU'VE
MADE A
MISTAKE.
I'M NOT A
WRESTLER...



WHOA!
AND ALREADY
THESE
FORMER
TEAMMATES
ARE ENEMIES!

WHA?!

I'M
TELLING
YOU,
YOU'VE GOT
THE WRONG
GUY!

twish

swipe

AND YOUR
MASK IS
DIFFERENT,
TOO.

YES.

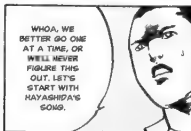
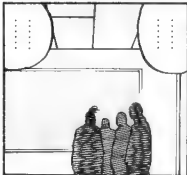
YOU SURE
ARE EATIN'
A LOT
TODAY,
TAKE-
NOUCHI.

YOU'RE STANDING OUT WAY TOO MUCH.

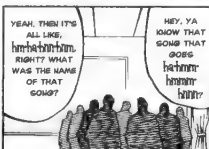
CHAPTER FORTY ONE: **WE ARE THE WORLD**













WE DON'T KNOW
THE NAME OF
THE SONG, BUT
ONE THING IS
FOR CERTAIN--
WE'RE ALL MUCH
BETTER AT
HUMMING NOW.



HAH. WE'RE
EVEN MORE
CONFUSED
THAN
WHEN WE
STARTED.

WELL?
DOES
ANYONE
KNOW WHAT
SONG THAT
IS?



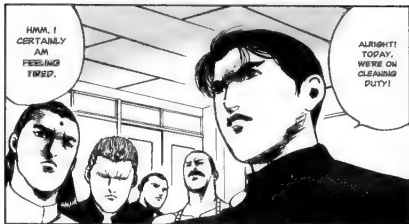
NO, I DON'T
THINK
THAT'S THE
PROBLEM...

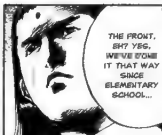
I GUESS
MAYBE WE
SHOULD'VE
HAD EVERYONE
DO DIFFERENT
PARTS, HUH?



IF YOU'VE FIGURED IT OUT, PLEASE WRITE ME.

CHAPTER FORTY-TWO: I'M A SOUJI MAN









MAEDA,
YOU AND
MOHAWK
GO GET
THE
HOPE
AND
BROOKS!

KAMIYAMA,
TAKE CARE
OF THE
CHALK-
BOARDS!

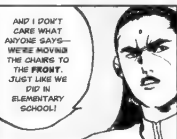


HMPF. IT
APPEARS
WE'RE
OUT OF
OPTIONS.
I WILL
ASSUME
COMMAND!



MASKED
MAN, YOU
WIPE
DOWN
THOSE
WINDOWS.

GOREILA AND
MUSTACHE,
GO GET THE
DUST RAGS.



AND I DON'T
CARE WHAT
ANYONE SAYS—
WE'RE MOVING
THE CHAIRS TO
THE FRONT.
JUST LIKE WE
DID IN
ELEMENTARY
SCHOOL!



NOW WAIT
A MINUTE!

CARRY ON,
GENTLEMEN.



YES,
THAT
WILL DO.



UM...
COULD
I HAVE
EVERYONE'S
ATTENTION
FOR A
MINUTE?



I'M SORRY,
HOKUTO-SAN,
BUT TODAY
I'M GOING TO
SPEAK UP!
ENOUGH IS
ENOUGH!

YOU DARE
RAISE YOUR
VOICE TO
MEET? KNOW
YOUR
PLACE,
WORM!





NO, YOU AREN'T.

CHAPTER FORTY-THREE: BOXER IN THE DARK





THANKS,
KAMIYAMA. I
APPRECIATE
EVERYONE'S
SUPPORT. I'M
SURE IT'LL GIVE
ME STRENGTH...



LET ME SHAKE
YOUR HAND, IT'S
THE LEAST I
CAN OFFER AS
A PARTING GIFT
TO A GOOD
FRIEND.



ACCEPTIN'
A FRIEND'S
HANDSHAKE
WITH MY
GLOVES ON
WOULDN'T BE
PRETTY RUDE.



WHAT
ARE YOU
DOING?

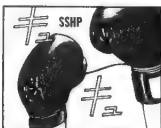


HEH. I KNOW
THIS DON'T
REALLY
SOUND LIKE
ME, BUT...I'LL
WIN THIS ONE
FOR YOU
GUYS!



YOU'RE
A GOOD
MAN,
HAYA-
SHIDA-
KUN.







BUT HAYASHIDA-KUN! WHEN IT COMES TO SUSHI, **NOTHING** IS MORE IMPORTANT THAN FRESHNESS! PLUS, IF YOU DON'T EAT IT, YOU'LL BE REFUSING YOUR FAN'S APPRECIATION! I KNOW IT'S RIGHT BEFORE THE FIGHT AND ALL, BUT STILL...

NO
THANKS!



YOU'LL PROBABLY WANT TO TAKE OFF THOSE GLOVES.

OK,
FINE!
I'LL EAT
IT!



NO, WE DIDN'T MEAN IT LIKE THAT.

YOU TRYIN' TO MAKE A MONKEY OUTTA ME OR WHAT?



SORRY,
BUT YOU'RE TOO LATE. WE ATE IT ALL.

ALRIGHT,
LEMME HAVE SOME!



SHUT UP!! I AMN'T TAKING 'EM OFF!

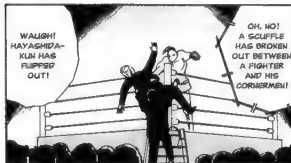
HAYA-
SHIDA-
KUN.



I'M NOT TAKING THESE GLOVES OFF AGAIN, NO MATTER WHAT!

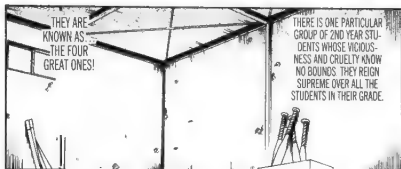
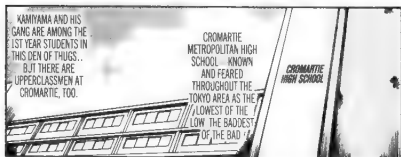
THAT'S
IT!





WHY SUSHI, OF ALL THINGS?!

CHAPTER FORTY-FOUR: MESSENGERS FROM HELL





THERE ARE
ACTUALLY
FIVE FOUR
GREAT
ONES.



MASAHIRO NOUCHI (NO ALIAS)

JIRO TAMİYAMA (AKA "TAMI")

SHIN YURIGAKA (AKA "YURI")

ISAO FUKUTOMI (AKA "TOMMY")

MASARU IGA (AKA "IGA-CHAN")



SIT
DOWN.



WELL, FOR
NOW, LET'S
JUST...



THE QUESTION IS, WHICH ONE OF US NEEDS TO GO?

WHAT DO WE DO, IGA-CHAN? WE'RE JUST GONNA LOOK SILLY IF WE HAVE FIVE FOUR GREAT ONES.



—Kazuo Doi



IN FACT, THIS STYLE
HAS HELPED US
ACHIEVE A TOTALLY
SOLID PRESENCE HERE.
IF YOU WANT PROOF OF
THAT, JUST LOOK AT
HOW NOBODY CAN EVEN
COME NEAR US. IT'S
'CUZ THEY'RE ALL
AFRAID!



I THINK YOU GUYS NEED TO
REMEMBER WHY WE'RE HERE.
WE CAME TOGETHER OUT OF
AN HONEST DESIRE TO FUSE
ROCK AND BADASSNESS. SURE,
WE MAY HAVE A FEW REGRETS
ABOUT OUR APPROACH, BUT IT'S
TOO LATE TO START CHANGING
THINGS NOW. THE MAKEUP
HAS TO STAY.

I HEARD
SOMETHIN' A
WHILE BACK. IT'S
NOT THAT
PEOPLE CAN'T
COME NEAR US...



YEAH?

HOLD ON.
I GOT
SOMETHIN'
TO SAY
ABOUT
THAT.



IF PEOPLE DON'T
BOTHER YOU AT
A SCHOOL AS
BAD AS THIS
ONE...WELL, IT'S
PRETTY
AMAZING!



HE
DID IT
AGAIN!



PUTTING
THAT
ASIDE
FOR THE
MOMENT

THERE'S
A BIG
DIFFERENCE
BETWEEN
"CAN'T" AND
"DON'T
WANT
TO!"



WHOA,
IS
THIS
TRUE?

IT'S THAT
THEY DON'T
WANT TO
COME NEAR
US.
I DON'T KNOW
HOW I FEEL
ABOUT THAT.



IF YOU WANT PROOF, LOOK
AT HOW WHENEVER THERE'S
A FIGHT WITH ANOTHER
SCHOOL, EVERYONE ELSE
DOES THE FIGHTING FOR US.
WE NEVER HAVE TO LIFT A
FINGER! NOW, IF THAT ISN'T
RESPECT, I DON'T KNOW
WHAT IS!



THE FACT IS,
WE RULE OVER
ALL OF THE
2ND YEARS.
THERE'S NO
DENYING IT.





DO YOU
THINK THAT
MAYBE
NOBODY
WANTS TO
LET US IN
ON THE
FIGHT?



WELL?

UH, I
BET
SOME-
THIN' TO
SAY
ABOUT
THAT.
TOO.



LOOK, TOMMY. I KNOW
THAT YOU GUYS HAVE
SOME THINGS TO GET
OFF YOUR CHESTS, BUT
WHAT YOU'RE SAYING
RIGHT NOW IS WAY OFF.
EVEN IF WE DO HAVE OUR
WEAKNESSES, I'M SURE
THEY'RE FOR COMPLETELY
DIFFERENT REASONS!



I THINK
YOU'RE
TOO
POSITIVE.

YOU SURE
ARE
NEGATIVE,
AREN'T
YOU?



HMM. I
GUESS I'D
HAVE TO
SAY...



THE
REAL
PROBLEM?

NOW, I
WANT YOU
GUYS TO
THINK
ABOUT
THE REAL
PROBLEM
FACING
US



HOLD ON, IGA-CHAN.
YOU'RE GETTING OFF
TRACK. THE PROBLEM
I'M TALKING ABOUT IS
DECIDING WHICH OF
US FIVE FOUR GREAT
ONES NEEDS TO GO.



YEAH.
THAT'S
FOR
SURE!

IT'D BE
REALLY
HARD FOR
US TO GET
JOBS WITH
THIS
MAKEUP!

LAST WEEK
I SAW A
COUPLE OF
UNDERCLASSMEN
TOTALLY IGNORE
NOUCHI WHEN HE
WALKED BY 'EM. I
SAY GUYS WHO
GET NO RESPECT
DON'T BELONG IN
THE FOUR GREAT
[TIMES]

GO
AHEAD,
YURI-KUN.

CAN I
SAY
SOME-
THIN'?

B-BABY
FACE? I HAVE A
BABY FACE?!

HOW CAN YOU TELL
THROUGH ALL THIS
MAKEUP?

WELL,
YOU DO
HAVE
KIND OF
A BABY
FACE.

SHUT UP!
WHY WOULD
THE 1ST
YEARS BE
DIS-
RESPECTIN'
ME?!

I DUBNO. I DON'T
THINK YOU CAN BE
A VERY HAPPY
PERSON IF YOU
ALWAYS GO
AROUND JUDGING
PEOPLE BY THEIR
APPEARANCES.
PERSONALLY, I'D
NEVER WANNA BE
LIKE THAT!

SAY WHAT YOU
WILL, BUT FIRST
IMPRESSIONS ARE
PRETTY DAMN
IMPORTANT
TO ME!

I
WOULDN'T
EXACTLY
SAY BABY
FACE...

ANYWAY,
EVEN IF I
DO, WHAT'S
THAT GOT
TO DO WITH
ANYTHING?

I'M NOT TOO
SURE ABOUT
MY MAKEUP
EITHER,
THOUGH...

GLASSES?

TAKE
THESE
GLASSES.
FOR
EXAMPLE.

YOU JUST
DON'T GET IT.
DO YOU?
APPEARANCE IS
EVERYTHING!



LOOK



GET REAL!
A PAIR OF
GLASSES
AIN'T
GONNA DO
THAT!

IF I PUT
THESE
THINGS ON,
I'LL TOTALLY
LOOK LIKE
SOME KINDA
SMART KID!



YOU
DON'T
LOOK
LIKE A
NERD
AT
ALL...

WOW.
APPEARANCE
REALLY IS
EVERY-
THING.

BELIEVE ME
WHEN I SAY I
CAN'T STUDY TO
SAVE MY LIFE!
BUT WITH THIS
CLEVER RUSE,
I CAN LOOK
LIKE A BOY
GENIUS!



HOLY
CRAP!

HE
LOOKS
LIKE A
NERD!



CUT IT
OUT,
WILL
YA?

YOU
LOOKIN'
FOR A
FIGHT?

I WAS
ONLY
TRYIN' TO
EXPLAIN IT
SIMPLY,
YOU
BASTARD!



HOLD ON, IGA-CHAK.
WE'RE TRYING TO BE
THE ULTIMATE
FUSION OF ROCK
AND BADASSNESS,
AND YOU'RE SITTING
HERE FOOLING
AROUND WITH A
PAIR OF GLASSES?
SCREW THAT!

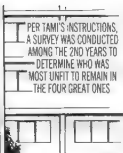


MAYBE IT'D BE
BETTER IF WE HAD
SOMEONE ELSE
DECIDE WHO
DOESN'T BELONG IN
THE FOUR GREAT
ONES. WE COULD
HAVE A VOTE OR
SOMETHING...

WHAT
ARE YOU
SAYING?



IF DECIDING
WHICH ONE OF US
DOESN'T BELONG
IS CAUSING SO
MUCH TROUBLE,
THEN IT'S OBVIOUS
THAT WE CAN'T
MAKE THE CALL ON
OUR OWN.



THERE ARE STILL FIVE OF THEM.

CHAPTER FORTY-FIVE: SHOCK ME



*Da face "Lurh"



HECK, WHAT IF THERE
~~WERE TEN~~
FOUR GREAT ONES?
THE COMPETITION
WITHIN OUR GROUP
WOULD END UP
MAKING EVERYONE
STRONGER!

YOU KNOW WHAT?
IT DOESN'T
MATTER IF THERE
ARE FOUR OR FIVE
OR HOWEVER
MANY OF US
ANYMORE!

SO WHAT KINDA
GUY DO YOU WANT
TO RECRUIT, IGA-
CHAN? YOU
PROBABLY GOT A
CERTAIN IMAGE IN
MIND, RIGHT?

EVEN WE'D
HAVE TO
WATCH OUR
BACKS, OR
THE NEW
GUYS COULD
PUT IT TO
US!

YEAH,
I CAN
SEE
THAT.

UH...
A FAT
DUDE?

IT'D BE COOL
IF WE COULD
FIND A FAT
DUDE TO
JOIN US.

WELL,
NOTHING IN
PARTICULAR.
BUT I WAS
THINKING...

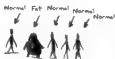
YOU COULD ALMOST
SAY THAT THE FAT GUY
IS ESSENTIAL TO ANY
TRUE TEAM! NOW, WHILE
THE RECENT TREND HAS
BEEN TO TURN AWAY
FROM THIS TRADITION...

BACK IN THE DAY,
ALMOST EVERY GROUP OR
TEAM HAD AT LEAST ONE
FAT MEMBER. IT'S USUALLY
THE DRUMMER IN A BAND,
OR THE CATCHER ON A
BASEBALL TEAM. AND
THERE'S ALWAYS A FAT
GUY IN THOSE FIVE-
MEMBER SUPERHERO
TEAMS, LIKE
GATCHAMAN.



IT WOULD
LOOK
SOMETHING
LIKE THIS.

IF I WERE
TO EXPLAIN
WITH A
DIAGRAM...



YEAH, IT
EVEN LENDS
US A
CERTAIN
AIR OF
STRENGTH!
NOT BAD.

IT COULD
HELP PEOPLE
TELL US
APART
BETTER...

HMM, I THINK
YOU MAY BE
ONTO SOME-
THING. HAVING A
FAT MEMBER
MAY ADD SOME
FLAIR AFTER ALL.

A FAT GUY
WOULD
PROBABLY
SWEAT EASY--
AND THAT
WOULD ONLY
RUIN HIS
MAKEUP.

W
H
A
T
?

THERE IS
ONE MAJOR
FLAW WITH
HAVING A
FAT GUY,
THOUGH.

HMM, I HADN'T
CONSIDERED
THAT. MAKEUP
IS ONE OF OUR
REQUIREMENTS...



I WANTED TO
ASK YOU
ABOUT THAT,
ABOUT THE
MAKEUP...

YES,
TOMMY?

LIM...

I KNOW, AND
I DON'T MEAN TO
TAKE US OFF
TRACK. I JUST
GET THE FEELING
THIS MIGHT BE
MY ONLY CHANCE
TO BRING IT UP...

WE'RE
TALKING
ABOUT
FAT
GUYS!

MAKEUP?

HOW LONG? YOU
SHOULD ALREADY
KNOW THE ANSWER TO
THAT. WE WILL WEAR
MAKEUP AS LONG AS
BUSINESSMEN WEAR
TIES, MY FRIEND!

I WAS JUST
WONDERING
HOW LONG
WE PLAN ON
WEARING
THIS STUFF.

RRRHH.
FINE.
WHAT
ABOUT
THE
MAKEUP?

I MEAN,
MAYBE WE
COULD JUST
WEAR IT AT
SCHOOL, AND
TAKE IT OFF
WHEN WE GO
HOME.

SO, WHAT
DO YOU
SUGGEST?

I KNOW WHERE
YOU'RE COMIN'
FROM, BUT THERE
ARE TIMES IN
EVERYDAY LIFE
WHEN IT CAN BE A
PAIN. I THINK YOU
CAN ALL AGREE
WITH THAT..



NO WAY!
I DIDN'T
KNOW
THAT!

WHAT ARE
YOU TALKING
ABOUT? THE
MAKEUP STAYS ON
24/7. THAT
IS OUR POLICY.



WHAT?
YOU MEAN
YOU GUYS
HAVEN'T?!

Y-YOU'VE
BEEN KEEPING
IT ON AT
HOME?!



WELL,
YEAH...
RIGHT?

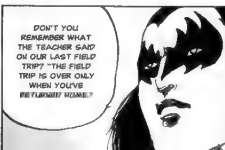
IN OTHER
WORDS,
YOU'RE ONLY
IN OUR GROUP
SO LONG AS
YOU'RE AT
SCHOOL. IS
THAT IT?



BUT WE ONLY
OPERATE AS A
GROUP HERE AT
SCHOOL. IT'S NOT
LIKE WE'RE THE
FOUR GREAT ONES
WHEN WE'RE
SOMEWHERE
ELSE!



THEN
THAT
MEANS...



DON'T YOU
REMEMBER WHAT
THE TEACHER SAID
ON OUR LAST FIELD
TRIP? "THE FIELD
TRIP IS OVER ONLY
WHEN YOU'VE
RETURNED HOME!"





GET A CLUE.

CHARACTER INTRODUCTIONS 7

CROMARTIE'S FOUR GREAT ONES

The Four Great Ones are from Cromartie's 2nd year class. Their most endearing quality is that there are five of them. Iga acts as their leader, addressing them in a selfish and domineering manner. He constantly bullies Nouchi, who stands alone because his makeup is styled after wrestling legend The Great Muta. Not only does it take a lot of time to draw the five Four Great Ones, but sometimes I'll give one of them the wrong makeup and have to redo a panel (or panels). There have been times when I'd finish drawing one of them only to cry mournfully, "Ah, that's the wrong makeup!" I think I'm done drawing these five (LOL). By the way, Iga's catchphrase is, "Appearances are everything." If that's the case, then you guys are in trouble.



POOTAN

Character from a popular television program. The name of his bespectacled sidekick is unknown. He must be very popular, seeing as how all the delinquents tune in to his show. I've received many angry and spiteful letters from readers asserting that "Pootan sucks!" However, the whole idea behind Pootan is that something that's popular can also suck, so there shouldn't be any surprise there. Pootan's catchphrase is "Pooo." He can often be found doing pottery or crushing sesame seeds for some unknown reason. What the hell is he supposed to be anyway? I hope you're looking forward to finding out more about this character—even though I probably won't say anything else about him.



CHARACTER INTRODUCTIONS 8

MASKED TAKENOUCHI



The masked monarch of Cromartie High. He attempted to hijack a plane full of Cromartie students bound for their class trip, but when the plan fell apart he escaped arrest by impersonating Yutaka Takenouchi. To further confound police in their international manhunt for him, he wears a mask and keeps a low profile by attending classes at Cromartie. you'd think this would make him stand out even more! His true name is unknown, as are the whereabouts of his former accomplices. He once did time in a Mexican prison (dude, how old are you?!) Take one look at him and you'll be tempted to start cracking jokes, but take a really GOOD look at him and you might start thinking he's the most normal character of all. Something's not right here...His catchphrase is "I'm a normal high school student."

KITAO ASAKURA



Proprietor of the South Wind Café, which is located next door to Cromartie High School. As such, it has become a popular gathering spot for the students. It's thought that this is the same café they were all seen hanging out at in earlier scenes. Asakura is on good terms with the delinquent students. He gives them sound advice and even the occasional scolding. He is also so generous that he lets them get away with not paying their tabs. But perhaps the most amazing thing of all is that he has hired Freddie as part-time help. Did he actually INTERVIEW him? Asakura, you rock.

CHAPTER FORTY-SIX: RUDIE CAN'T FAIL

DO YOU EVER
THINK ABOUT
THE FUTURE?

YEAH?

HEY,
MAEDA.

WE'RE ONLY IN
OUR FIRST YEAR
OF HIGH SCHOOL,
Y'KNOW. ANYWAY,
HOW FAR IN THE
FUTURE ARE YOU
TALKING ABOUT?

HM, I'M
STARTIN' TO
FEEL LIKE I
SHOULD. I'M
GETTING
KINDA
WORRIED...

SURE
DON'T.

EVERYONE'S GOT
DREAMS WHEN
THEY'RE KIDS,
RIGHT? BUT THE
OLDER YOU GET,
THE MORE THOSE
DREAMS KINDA
FADE AWAY.

I DON'T
WANT TO
HEAR THIS
FROM A
GUY WHO
HAS A
MOHAWK.

LIKE, WHEN
WE'RE
LOOKIN'
FOR
JOBS.

UH, I DON'T THINK
ANY OF US COULD
EVER MAKE IT AS
OFFICE WORKERS...

SOCIETY'S LIKE A BIG
OCEAN THAT JUST
PULLS YOU ALONG, 'TIL
NEXT THING YOU KNOW
YOU'VE BEEN TURNED
INTO AN OFFICE WORKER
OR SOMETHIN'. SOUNDS
LIKE A PRETTY EMPTY
LIFE, IF YA ASK ME.

I FOUND IT
BURIED IN MY
CLOSET. ALL
MY CHILDHOOD
DREAMS ARE
WRITTEN DOWN
IN THERE.

YOUR
ELEMENTARY
SCHOOL
YEAR-
BOOK?

TAKE A
LOOK AT
THIS.

YAMAGUCHI
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
2ND GRADE
YEARBOOK

"WHEN I GROW
UP, I WANT TO
BE A FROG.
SHINJIRO
HAYASHIDA."

OH...
SURE,
NO PRO-
BLEM.

WOULD
YA MIND
READING
IT?

WELL
ANYHOW,
NOW I HAVE
NO IDEA
WHAT IT
MEANS...

EITHER
WAY,
YOU WERE A
WEIRD
KID.

MY PARENTS
TOLD ME I
PROBLY MEANT
I WANTED TO
RAISE FROGS
OR SOMETHIN'.

NOW HERE I AM,
A BADASS AND
ALL, AND I STILL
FEEL THE SAME
WAY!! I WANNA
KEEP THE
DREAM ALIVE!

THE ONLY THING I
CAN SAY FOR SURE
IS THAT EVEN
WHEN I WAS A KID,
I KNEW I DIDN'T
WANNA LEAD SOME
ORDINARY LIFE.



WE WERE JUST
TALKIN' ABOUT
WHAT WE WANNA
DO IN THE
FUTURE. WHAT
DO YOU WANNA
DO, KAMIYAMA?

I WASN'T TALKING
ABOUT THE
FUTURE...



OH. HEY,
KAMI-
YAMA.



WHAT'RE
YOU
TALKING
ABOUT?



I GAVE
THAT UP
WHEN I
ENROLLED
HERE.



THAT'S A
SURPRISE. I
WOULDA
THOUGHT A
SERIOUS GUY
LIKE YOU WOULD
HAVE A
PLAN.

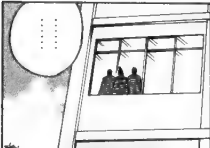


ME? I HAVEN'T
GIVEN IT MUCH
THOUGHT. I
BELIEVE IN
TAKING THINGS
ONE DAY AT A
TIME, AND
ALWAYS DOING
MY BEST.



I REALLY JUST
DON'T CARE
ABOUT A LOT OF
THINGS ANYMORE...
AND I MEAN THAT
IN A GOOD WAY.

I THINK THAT
EVERYTHING I'VE
SEEN AND BEEN
THROUGH HERE
HAS ACTUALLY
LIBERATED ME IN
A WAY.



...



HUH?

TAKE A
LOOK OUT
THE
WINDOW.



FOR EXAMPLE, YOU MIGHT
COMPLAIN ABOUT HOW YOUR
DOG IS A REAL PAIN TO TAKE
CARE OF, BUT IF THE GREAT
NATURE SPECIALIST
MITSUGORO-SAN WERE TO
OVERHEAR, HE'D JUST SAY
SOMETHING LIKE "AH, IT'S NOT
ALL THAT."

PEOPLE TEND TO
REGARD THINGS
FROM THEIR OWN
POINTS OF VIEW—
BUT THERE ARE
OTHER PEOPLE IN
THIS WORLD
BESIDES
THEMSELVES.

YES,
MAEDA-
KUN?

BUT,
STILL...

EXACTLY. TRY
PUTTING YOURSELF
IN THE SHOES OF A
HIGH SCHOOL
STUDENT WHOSE
NATIONALITY--OR
EVEN HUMANITY--IS
IN QUESTION.

IN OTHER
WORDS, THE
KINDA
PROBLEMS
WE'RE
WORRYIN'
ABOUT ARE
REALLY NO
BIG DEAL. IS
THAT IT?

IT SEEMS
I STILL
HAVEN'T
GOTTEN
THROUGH
TO YOU.

I MEAN, IF
YOU'RE COMIN'
TO AN IDIOT
SCHOOL LIKE
THIS, YOU
CAN'T HELP BUT
WORRY ABOUT
YOUR FUTURE!

WHY DON'T
YOU HAVE
ANOTHER
LOOK OUT
THE WINDOW?

YOU
WONDER IF
GRADUATING
FROM HERE IS
EVEN GOING
TO MEAN
ANYTHING.



ALL I CAN SAY IS
THOSE GUYS
DON'T HAVE A
SINGLE CONCERN
ABOUT THEIR
OWN FUTURES.
THAT MUCH IS
CERTAIN.

I DON'T
KNOW.

BUT WHY
ARE THEY
DOING IT?

YOU
STILL
DON'T
GET IT?

BUT
YOU
KNOW
...

NOW I GET IT,
NOTHING EVER
GETS THEM
DOWN, HUH?

WHEN YOU
LOOK AT THEM,
YOUR OWN
WORRIES JUST
DISAPPEAR,
DON'T THEY?

YOU'VE
GOTTEN
PRETTY
MEAN
LATELY...

LOOK, IT'S
NOT LIKE
BADASSES
HAVE
FUTURES
ANYWAY!

YOU'RE
SUCH A
WORRY-
WART! AND
YOU CALL
YOURSELF A
BADASS?

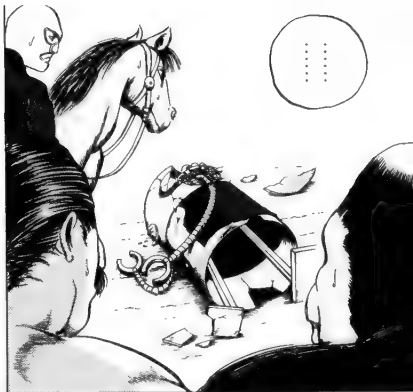
YOU
CAN SAY
WHAT
YOU LIKE,
BUT I...

JUST
LOOK OUT
THE
WINDOW
AND
BE AT
EASE...

I SUPPOSE
NOTHING I
SAY IS
GOING TO
MAKE A
DIFFERENCE.

STOP
TAKING
THINGS SO
SERIOUSLY!

I'M
TELLING
YOU, IT'S
REALLY
NO BIG
DEAL!



WHAT A TWISTED TWIST OF AN ENDING.

HAYASHIDA VS. HAYASHIDA



LOVE NONA (1)

5分で描いたマンガ



LOVE NONA (2)

I couldn't knock down a single pin, so I got angry and left while still wearing the bowling shoes.



I didn't have a choice. I went bowling, even though I didn't really want to.

Hmm. I have no idea what to write about.

When I first decided to do a manga, I had absolutely no idea what I would write about.



But nothing I did went well for me, and it just made me even more stressed out.

Pachinko



Video Games



Golf



I tried a lot of different things to relieve the stress.

I didn't blame myself for not being able to think of anything, though.



I should try writing a manga to relieve this stress!

gleam



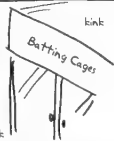
Then I thought...

There wasn't anything I could do about it, so I sought diversion at the local batting cages!

kink

Batting Cages

ba-kink



I see...

And these are the bowling shoes from that day.



Interviewer

And there you have it—the reason I started doing manga.

This is stressing me out even more. I have to find a way to blow off some steam.

But I couldn't hit a single ball. It only stressed me out even more.



Afterword:

I'M POOPED.

Eiji Nonaka

CROMARTIE HIGH SCHOOL VOLUME TWO

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TRANSLATOR'S NOTES

Cromartie High School Vol. 02

№ 2

SugoROCK

In Japanese, *sugoroku* is a children's board/dice game. SugoROCK is a *sugoroku* that rocks.

№ 4

Shopping Boogie

Also known as "*Katmono Boogie*," a song by Kasagi Shizuko.

Shooting Star Press

The Chapter 27 title shares the same name as the signature move of pro wrestler Billy Kidman.

The Idle Maeda

The Chapter 28 title is parodying the name of the 1930 Japanese film *Hatamoto Taikutsu Otoko* ("The Idle Vassal").

Battles Without Honor and Humanity

The Chapter 29 title again parodies the movie title *Jingi Naki Tatakai* (1973), which was directed by Kinji Fukusaku of *Battle Royale* fame. In North America, the film was released as *The Yakuza Papers—Battles Without Honor and Humanity*.

Search for a Sidekick

The Chapter 36 title is spoofing the French movie *Cherchez L'Idole* (1963), which in Japanese was *Idol o Sagase* (lit. "Search for a Sidekick").

The Two are Idols

In Japan, the Beatles album *Help!* was also known as "The Four are Idols" (*Yonin wa Idol*).

I'm a SOUJI Man

The word *souji* in the Chapter 42 title literally means "cleanup" and is perhaps a parody of the Blues Brothers' "Soul Man."

Messengers From Hell

An alternate (Japanese) title to KISS's debut album.

№ 47

Headband

Hayashida's headband originally had the kanji for *shunto*, a reference to Japan's "spring labor offensive" (a coordinated effort among unions to bargain for wages). The *shunto* began in 1952.

Bike gang

Known in Japan as *bosozoku*, these gangs are made up of mostly adolescents, and are infamous for tearing down public streets at dangerously high speeds and/or making incredible noise with their (often illegally) modified bikes and cars—especially at late-night hours. The increasingly violent *bosozoku* are a big problem for law enforcement in some areas of Japan. In fact, in November of 1999, over 1,000 of them squared off against Hiroshima police in a riot that spanned three full days.

UFO

This is an actual organization founded by Antonio Inoki, one of the most famous Japanese pro wrestlers of all time. In June of 1976, he fought a 15-round bout against boxing superstar Muhammad Ali that ended in a draw.

Box lunches

Box lunches, or *bento* as they are known in Japan, are served restaurant-style in flat, rectangular, lacquered boxes (or in a variety of disposable boxes as “fast food”). They are most often made up of steamed rice, fish or meat, and one or more kinds of pickled vegetables.

Zaibatsu

The *zaibatsu* are large Japanese conglomerates whose origins go back hundreds of years. These companies gained considerable social and political power, especially in the early 1900s, and many are still around today. The supposed “big four” of the *zaibatsu* are Mitsubishi, Fuyo, Sumitomo, and Sanwa (but don’t tell that to The Hokuto Foundation).

Masked Takenouchi

The character on Masked Takenouchi’s forehead is the *take* in Takenouchi. Please remember that even though it is a cunning disguise, this character is not in fact Yutaka Takenouchi.

Kanji 101

Most if not all kanji have more than one reading, depending on the word and/or combination they are used in. Readings generally fall into two basic categories, *on-yomi* and *kun-yomi*. *On-yomi* are the modern-day pronunciations derived from the original Chinese readings (dating back to when the characters were imported from China), while *kun-yomi* are native Japanese pronunciations assigned to the kanji. When it comes to names and surnames, either *on-yomi* or *kun-yomi* may be used. Some combinations, however, would simply never happen because they would sound completely unnatural—case in point, reading *wawa* as *gen* to make “Hagigen.” It’s so silly, it makes you wonder if Hayashida is saying it on purpose.

Nicknames

It is not uncommon for Japanese singers (or other celebrities) to truncate their own names and affix the intimate suffix *-chan*, or just play around and create nicknames for themselves.

Gatchaman

Also known as *Battle of the Planets*, aka *G-Force*. The former version was extensively edited and rewritten for distribution in the United States, while the latter was an attempt at a more faithful recreation of the original anime. The story itself concerned five heroes in bird-themed costumes fighting the forces of evil in space.

Great Muta

One alias of legendary Japanese wrestler Keiji Mutoh. He also had a professional wrestling career in the US with the WCW and NWA (in which he was a one-time World Heavyweight Champion), where he wrestled under his own name. He achieved several outstanding accomplishments, like winning the World Tag-Team Championship in 2000, and was a member of the WCW's now-defunct NWO.

Masanori Hata aka Mutsugoro-san

A famous Japanese zoologist, author and nature-show personality. Also directed the film *Milo and Otis* (Originally *Koneko Monogatari*). He had a farm on Japan's northern island of Hokkaido (which has a reputation as Japan's great wilderness/nature preserve), where he raised all kinds of animals. He is famous for his love and knowledge of animals and nature in general. Sadly, Mr. Hata passed away several years ago.

Hayashida vs. Hayashida

This short is so named because Shinjiro Hayashida from *Cromartie High School* is squaring off against his counterpart from Elji Nonaka's earlier manga *Kaccho Baka Ichidai*. As the author pointed out in Volume 1 of *Cromartie*, both Hayashida and Maeda were shamelessly stolen from *Kaccho Baka Ichidai* and dropped into *Cromartie*.

Pachinko

Pachinko is an extremely popular gambling game. In Japan, pachinko parlors are as common as arcades, and perhaps twice as noisy. A pachinko machine is best described as an upright pinball machine, often with some small video displays on it. The machine drops a stream of small metal balls, some of which just fall down to the bottom of the "playing area," while others fall into special holes that set off mini slot machine games. If you win the mini slots, you get more balls to drop. The player is rather passive, and tends only to control the rate at which the balls are dropped. Pachinko machine winnings can be exchanged for prizes at the parlor's gift shop. In many cases, one can exchange these prizes for cash at a counter or window outside the parlor (thus circumventing Japan's anti-gambling laws).

-san/-kun

Most people will be familiar with the Japanese tendency to affix *-san* to the end of last (or even first) names to increase the politeness level. A good rule of thumb is that *-san* (often equated to Ms., Mr. or Mrs.) is used when addressing someone outside one's group (of friends, family, co-workers, etc.) or in some cases, superiors. Kuniyama addresses Takenouchi with *-san*, reflecting greater respect for this "underground kingpin."

Another term often used in this volume is *-kun*. Its usage varies more than *-san*, and is often applied when addressing an (usually, but not always, male) inferior—for example, a teacher speaking to a student. It can also be used by friends or social equals when addressing each other, as in the many instances where Kuniyama addresses Hayashida and the others.

Several more of these suffixes, or "honorifics," are employed in Japanese—some more formal, some less so, and some downright derogatory! In translation, honorifics are often dropped, as certain manners of speech and proper English titles can usually take their places without sacrificing social nuances. Even in Japanese, some manga make little or no use of honorifics, while others rely on them to varying degrees. The honorifics were preserved in this translation because the story takes place in the highly-stratified environment of a Japanese high school, and touches on Japanese social intricacies that others don't.

Hilarious Hoodlums!

All hell is breaking loose in the halls of the notorious Cromartie High School! For starters, Mechazawa has been sold as a kitchen appliance. Meanwhile, muscle-bound (and muscle-headed) Freddie is now in the custody of aliens. What's more, a new bully has arrived to terrorize the remaining thugs and lackeys! But it's all just another day for the underachieving- and undereducated-students of Cromartie High!

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